State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

Recommendation to Adopt 2021 Start-Up Charter School Petition Application

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Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Charter School Commission approve the 2021 Start-Up State Charter School Petition Application as presented.

Summary of Proposed Action:

SCSC staff recommend continuing to utilize an electronic process for application submission. Staff made few substantive changes to the 2020 application the SCSC approved in September 2019. The revisions include:

1. Updates to applicable submission deadlines to conform to the SCSC approved petition calendar;
2. Updates to the language detailing submission requirements for existing charter schools seeking to transfer to SCSC authorization to conform to SCSC Rule 691-2-.09; and,
3. Identification of petition deficiencies that will result in the rejection of an application, consistent with SCSC Rule 691-2-.02.

The application, if approved, will be released to applicants on October 19, 2020. Prior to the application release, SCSC staff will host a Petitioner Bootcamp to prepare potential petitioners for the petition process. Bootcamp topics include the elements of a successful charter petition, legal requirements, board governance, financial controls, and budget preparation. In addition, SCSC staff will host office hours to allow petitioners to receive additional guidance as they prepare for application submission.

In accordance with SCSC Rule 691-2-.02, applications that meet an initial review for legal compliance will be reviewed substantively. If the substantive review does not reveal significant deficiencies, SCSC staff will convene an interview panel to further evaluate the application.

Fill out your application form

Please fill out all required information before submitting your application.

Applicant Information

Applicants must designate one individual to serve as the contact for official communications. Please note that this information is often requested and provided pursuant to the Georgia Open Records Act. Petitioners should avoid listing personal numbers and email addresses whenever possible

Applicant School Name	_____
Name of Contact Person	_____
Title of Contact Person	_____
Applicant Contact Email	_____
Applicant Contact Phone Number	_____
Applicant Contact Address (City, State, Zip)	_____

A. The State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia (SCSC)

The State Charter Schools Commission (SCSC) was established by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2082 as a state-level charter school authorizer under the authority of the State Board of Education. The SCSC reviews petitions for state charter schools and approves or denies petitions in a manner to ensure that all charters for state charter schools are consistent with state education goals.

The SCSC will vote on SCSC staff recommendations to approve or deny charter schools at a public meeting. SCSC staff will formulate recommendations based on all available information regarding a charter school applicant, including, but not limited to, the petition, the interview with the petitioner, input from the local board of education and any supplemental information received from the petitioner or other interested party that may affect the school's viability and operation.

B. Eligible Petitioners

A charter school petitioning for authorization by the SCSC must: Have a state-wide attendance zone; or Have a defined attendance zone and demonstrate that the charter school has special characteristics, such as a special population, a special curriculum, or some other feature or features which enhance educational opportunities. For the 2021 Petition Cycle, all applicants must plan to open in the 2022-2023 school year or later. If required by the appropriate local board of education, the school must also have submitted a letter of intent to local school district and prior to the school district's deadlines. Local school district deadlines for submitting letters of intent vary throughout the state. It is incumbent on the charter petitioner to identify the appropriate deadlines. It is not the responsibility of the local school district to inform prospective charter schools of deadlines.

Existing or established charter schools may apply for authorization by the SCSC in the 2021 Petition Cycle only if the charter school receives permission from its current authorizers to agree to rescind or waive the obligations of the current charter prior to the charter school's submission of a petition to the SCSC. An existing charter school that is approved by the SCSC may remain open provided the school's existing charter obligations will expire prior to the effective date of the SCSC charter. The existing charter school may not need to have a planning year prior to being in operation.

Until such time that the State Board of Education and the State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia (SCSC) jointly establish a code of principles and standards of charter school authorizing, the SCSC shall not consider a petition by an existing charter school to transfer to SCSC authorization unless the existing charter school has received notice from its local authorizer that the authorizer will or intends to terminate or non-renew the charter contract. After a code of principles and standards of charter school authorizing s established in accordance with applicable law, an existing charter school authorized by a local board of education that fails to meet the principles and standards of charter school authorizing on its annual evaluation for two consecutive years may petition to transfer its charter authorization to the State Charter Schools Commission.

C. Concurrent Submissions

(1) A charter school that has a **statewide attendance zone** that is petitioning for authorization by the SCSC must submit its petition to the local board of education in which the school is proposed to be located concurrently with its submission of its petition to the SCSC. The submission of the charter petition to the local board of education is for informational purposes only. In other words, a charter school that has a statewide attendance zone does not need to be denied by a local board of education prior to authorization

by the SCSC.

(2) A charter school that has a **statewide attendance zone that only provides virtual instruction** that is petitioning for authorization by the SCSC does not need to submit a charter petition to a local board of education.

(3) A charter school that has a **defined attendance zone** must submit its petition to the local board of education in which the school is proposed to be located and to each local school system from which the proposed school plans to enroll students. The charter school must submit the petition to the local boards of education in accordance with the deadlines established by those local boards of education. It is incumbent on the charter petitioner to identify the appropriate deadlines. It is not the responsibility of the local school district to inform prospective charter schools of deadlines. A charter school that has a defined attendance zone that does not submit it petition to the local board of education in which the school is proposed to be located by the deadline established by that local board of education will not be considered by the SCSC. The SCSC will not act on the charter school's petition for approval until the local board of education in which the school is proposed to be located denies the petition or fails to approve or deny the petition within the time allotted by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064.

D. Petition Contents

A charter school petition is a proposal to create a new school or to renew the charter of an existing charter school. The petition serves to describe and summarize the charter school's mission and proposed operations. The petition must address all applicable requirements of the Charter Schools Act of 1998, as amended (O.C.G.A §§ 20-2-2060 through 20-2-2071), requirements applicable to state charter schools as provided by O.C.G.A § 20-2-2084, State Board of Education Rules applicable to charter schools, and any local school system rules and policies. The petition may not differ from the petition submitted to the local board of education; however, the petitioner should supplement the petition to address the proposed school's capacity to adhere to the responsibilities of operating as a Local Education Agency (LEA) and with the funding provided to state charter schools rather than the funding provided to locally-approved charter schools.

Petitions should include explicit information and evidence that the proposed school will meet all requirements of law and rule. Reciting the requirements of law and rule is not sufficient. The petition should explain how the school will utilize innovation and flexibility to serve the needs of students in Georgia and how the school will meet the requirements of rule or law. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review all resources available on the SCSC website prior to drafting and submitting a petition (http://scsc.georgia.gov/). Additionally, applicants may want to review our Glossary of Terms of frequently used terminoloy.

Petitions submitted to the SCSC must include specific documents and information. Required documents are noted throughout the application. Failure of an applicant to submit all required documentation or to otherwise adhere to the application requirements may constitute a significant deficiency, which will disqualify an application from further consideration during the 2021 petition cycle. If an application contains significant deficiencies, the SCSC staff will notify the applicant of the deficiencies in writing. The applicant may remedy the identified significant deficiencies and submit a revised state charter school petition to the SCSC for review in a subsequent petition cycle.

Please note that the petition is not a charter. The submission of a petition does not guarantee that the SCSC will authorize a charter. Additionally, please note that all petitions and petition packages submitted to the SCSC are subject to the Georgia Open Records Act.

E. Deadline

The petition package must be submitted electronically by **4:00 PM April 9, 2021**. Petitions received after that date will not be considered. Petition packages not submitted via FluidReview will not be considered.

The SCSC will not accept any information or documentation submitted after the deadline unless expressly requested by SCSC staff.

☐ I confirm that I have read and understand the information outlined above.

Petition Cover Page

Part I. Proposed Charter School Information

Name of Proposed Charter School: _____

Name of the Georgia nonprofit corporation that will hold the charter if granted: _____

Check ONLY one: *Please note that this selection will be used to determine legal requirements for submission in accordance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-2084.

☐ The proposed charter school has a state-wide attendance zone.
☐ The proposed charter school has a state-wide attendance zone but offers only virtual instruction.
☐ The proposed charter school has a defined attendance zone that is not state-wide.

LEA in which the School will be Physically Located: _____

(for Defined Attendance Zones ONLY) - LEA(s) that will be Included in the Proposed Attendance Zone: _____

Prospective Address for School Location: _____

Part II. Assurances and Signatures

All assurances must be marked or checked and all dates completed by the chairperson of the proposed charter school's governing board. The charter petitioner (or school leader) and chairperson must sign below the final assurance to further indicate understanding and agreement to the requirements of governing a state charter school.

Will your school offer virtual instruction?

If your plan contemplates blended learning, you should select "yes".

☐ Yes
☐ No

This petition was submitted to appropriate the local board of education(s) as required by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2084(c):

☐ I agree

Date that the petition was submitted to local boards:

_____/____/____(YYYY/MM/DD)

This petition was approved by the governing board of the proposed charter school:

☐ I agree

Date that the petition was approved by the governing board:

_____/____/____(YYYY/MM/DD)

The applicant understands and agrees to the following:

☐ If approved, the charter school will be compared to its attendance zone for the purposes of academic accountability.
☐ Charter schools are required to utilize a grade configuration that will provide the SCSC objective, valid, and reliable data regarding student achievement for each year of the school's charter contract as well as comparison data for the school district(s) included in its attendance zone for each year of its charter term in accordance with the SCSC Comprehensive Performance Framework. Practically, this means that schools must enroll students that will participate in scored state assessments Year 1.
☐ If approved, the charter school will utilize and expend funds in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

 If a charter is granted, the proposed charter school programs, services, and activities will operate in accordance with the terms of the charter and all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.
 All programs, services, and activities offered will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, religion, disability, age, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, veteran status, or citizenship status.

These assurances are agreed to by:

Use your mouse to sign each section in the signature fields below.

Date:

_____/____/____(YYYY/MM/DD)

Date:

_____/____/____(YYYY/MM/DD)

Local Board Action Acknowledgement

Will your school use a defined attendance zone?

A defined attendance zone is any attendance zone that is not a statewide attendance zone. If you plan to utilize a statewide attendance zone, you should select "no", otherwise please select "yes". This answer should align with your answer of Part 1 of the Petition Cover Page.

☐ Yes
☐ No

1. Explanation. A charter school that has a defined attendance zone must submit its petition to the local board of education in which the school is proposed to be located and to each local school system from which the proposed school plans to enroll students concurrently with the submission of its petition to the SCSC. As a result, the charter school will not have received an approval or denial at the time of its submission to the SCSC. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2084, the SCSC will not consider the charter school's petition for approval until the local board of education in which the school is proposed to be located denies the petition or fails to approve or deny the petition within the time allotted by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064. Accordingly, a charter school applicant that has a defined attendance zone must notify the SCSC of the local board of education's action regarding the charter school to be included in the petition package.

2. Acknowledgement. As the charter school in this petition has a defined attendance zone, the school must be denied approval from the local board of education in which the school is proposed to be located prior to the SCSC acting on the petition for approval. For the petition to be considered by the SCSC, I understand that I must submit a copy of the denial letter, **along with a written response to the denial letter that does not exceed ten pages**, to the SCSC.

In the event the local board of education approves the petition, I understand that I must notify the SCSC of the approval. I understand that the charter school must then follow the requirements and processes of the State Board of Education to become a locally-approved charter school.

Additionally, in the event the local board of education fails to approve or deny the petition within the time allotted in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064, I will notify the SCSC of such failure within thirty (30) calendar days of the expiration of the time allotted in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064.

I understand that the notification of local board action and written response, if applicable, should be mailed or delivered, within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving notice of the local board action, to the following address:

State Charter Schools Commission
504 Twin Towers West
205 Jesse Hill Jr., Drive, SE
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

I understand that failure to remit the notification in a timely manner will result in the petition package being incomplete, and the package will not be considered by the SCSC.

Acknowledged hereto by:

Date
_____/____/____(YYYY/MM/DD)

Date
_____/____/____(YYYY/MM/DD)

Executive Summary

General Information

Name of Proposed Charter School: _____

Proposed Opening Date: _____

Fully-Enrolled Grade Range: _____

Will the School Enroll All Grades the First Year?
- Yes
- No

Expected Initial Enrollment (# of students Year 1): _____

Proposed Full Enrollment (# of students Year 5): _____

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-51(c)(4) states that “No person who has an immediate family member sitting on a local board of education or serving as the local school superintendent or as a principal, assistant principal, or system administrative staff in the local school system shall be eligible to serve as a member of such local board of education. As used in this paragraph, the term ‘immediate family member’ means a spouse, child, sibling, or parent or the spouse of a child, sibling, or parent.

☐ I understand and agree that state charter schools are required to adhere to the above-referenced code section and that no members of the school’s governing board or administrative team may violate this code section at any time.

How many governing board members and administrators will be involved in the application process?

This number will be utilized to populate the required Conflict of Interest forms and Applicant History forms. These forms must be completed by each governing board member of the nonprofit organization that will hold the charter of the proposed state charter school as well as any individual holding administrative oversight over any aspect of school operations. Failure to complete a Conflict of Interest or Applicant History form for a required individual may result in the rejection of your application.

Conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to, business relationships which place a governing board member and/or administrator in a position of personal financial gain or other external relationships which may inappropriately influence the way in which a governing board member and/or administrator carries out their responsibilities for the school. Please note, should your governing board and/or administrative team add or subtract members between the time of submission and your petition interview (if granted), you will be expected to update your Conflict of Interest and Applicant History forms at the time of the interview. The SCSC may require additional information to perform a full evaluation.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15

For each year of the proposed charter term, indicate the number of students the charter school plans to serve. Please note that schools are required to utilize a grade configuration that will provide the SCSC objective, valid, and reliable data regarding student achievement for each year of the school’s charter contract as well as comparison data for the school district(s) included in its

attendance zone for each year of its charter term in accordance with the SCSC Comprehensive Performance Framework. Practically, this means that schools must enroll students that will participate in scored state assessments Year 1.

Please note, this table requires that you enter a value in each box. Therefore, applicants must enter "0" if they will not serve a grade during a given year.

	K	1	2
Yr 1	_____	_____	_____
Yr 2	_____	_____	_____
Yr 3	_____	_____	_____
Yr 4	_____	_____	_____
Yr 5	_____	_____	_____

	3	4	5
Yr 1	_____	_____	_____
Yr 2	_____	_____	_____
Yr 3	_____	_____	_____
Yr 4	_____	_____	_____
Yr 5	_____	_____	_____

	6	7	8
Yr 1	_____	_____	_____
Yr 2	_____	_____	_____
Yr 3	_____	_____	_____
Yr 4	_____	_____	_____
Yr 5	_____	_____	_____

	9	10	11
Yr 1	_____	_____	_____
Yr 2	_____	_____	_____
Yr 3	_____	_____	_____
Yr 4	_____	_____	_____
Yr 5	_____	_____	_____

	12	Total
Yr 1	_____	_____
Yr 2	_____	_____
Yr 3	_____	_____
Yr 4	_____	_____
Yr 5	_____	_____

Research shows that charter schools are more academically, financially and organizationally stable if they grow by only one grade each year. If the charter school plans to grow more than 1 grade each year, please provide a brief rationale for this growth model in 350 words or less in the box below.

*Please note that the SCSC reserves the right to condition expansion and increased enrollment on the charter school's ability to meet performance goals and compliance requirements.

_____

_____

In the box below, use fewer than 350 words to state the charter school's mission and describe why this initiative is meaningful or important to your group. Also provide a brief description of any defining features of the proposed school.

In the box below, use fewer than 350 words to describe the charter school's academic program, specifically focusing on its innovation and need for flexibility and any special characteristics, such as a special population, a special curriculum, or some other feature or features which enhance educational opportunities.

In the box below, use fewer than 350 words to describe the charter school's organizational structure, specifically focusing on its innovation and need for flexibility, its general partnership structure with an educational management organization (ESP) if any, and the school's community interest and need.

Petition Contents

Please note:

When developing a petition, applicants should keep in mind that the SCSC has developed a comprehensive performance framework that assesses a school's overall academic, operational, and financial status on an annual basis. The SCSC comprehensive performance framework will be incorporated into the charter contracts for all state charter schools approved by the SCSC for the 2016-2017 school year or later. State charter schools will be evaluated based on the indicators and measures of the comprehensive performance framework rather than individual performance goals contained in the charter contract. You can find additional information on the performance framework here .

Additionally, applicants should be aware that for accountability purposes the school's performance will be compared to that of its attendance zone. For defined attendance zones that include only a single district, the school will be compared to that same district. For defined attendance zones including multiple districts, the school will be compared to a simple average of those districts and a weighted comparison score based on the proportion of students the school enrolls from each district they serve. For schools selecting a statewide attendance zone, the school will be compared to the state average, as well as a weighted score using the same process described above for multiple district attendance zones. A school must only outperform one of the comparison scores in order to be considered meeting academic standards for a given year.

☐ I am aware of these requirements.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

DESCRIPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

1. Describe the school's education model, focusing on the overall approach to learning and teaching in the school (ex. STEM, Arts-Infused, Dual-Language, College Prep).

2. Describe the instructional methods to be used in the school (ex. Project-based, blended, differentiation, mastery learning) and any distinct or unique educational practices (ex. Looping, multi-grade classrooms, year-round school calendar).

3. Describe your curricula, whether it will be developed in-house or purchased from a vendor (ex. Singapore Math, Edgenuity & Compass, etc.), and how you will ensure alignment to Georgia Standards of Excellence.

4. Describe how the school will integrate all aspects of its educational model, instructional methods, and curricula in an organized and cohesive program that complements the school's mission and vision. Please note that the petition budget should reflect any costs associated with the implementation of the school's educational program.

5. Will a third party* (universities, non-profits, community partners) be involved in the delivery of a curriculum to students, either directly or indirectly? *Excluding any relationship with an Educational Service Provider (ESP) or local school district. Please note, a "yes" response will require you to upload an agreement describing the nature of the relationship and how the partner's involvement will be integrated into the school's operations.

☐ Yes
☐ No

6. If the school will be single-gender, describe how the school will comply with Title IX.

7. Describe the anticipated teacher-to-student ratio and the rationale for maintaining this ratio. The school's proposed budget should reflect any costs associated with the anticipated teacher-to-student ratio.

8. Describe how the charter school will meet the needs of students identified as gifted and talented. The school's proposed budget should reflect any costs associated with serving students identified as gifted and talented.

9. If this is a charter high school, describe how the charter high school will determine that a student has satisfied the requirements for high school graduation, including the credits or units to be earned and the completion credentials to be awarded.

10. Describe how the charter will meet its college and career ready obligations for all students, including providing career guidance and academic counseling, exposure to career awareness lessons and career clusters, and creation and review of initialized graduation plans.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSESSMENT METHODS

11. Describe how the school will obtain student performance data, both baseline and iterative, and how the school will use this data to drive instructional improvements throughout the year. Please include the systems (i.e. SLDS, SIS, etc.) and assessments (i.e. mandatory summative state assessments, formative progress monitoring interim/benchmark assessments, teacher created rubrics, etc.) the school plans to use in this process. The school's proposed budget should reflect any costs associated with the school's plans.

12. Explain how the school will tailor its instructional approach during the pendency of its charter term if student achievement goals are not met. This answer should demonstrate the school's ability to ensure curriculum and assessments are aligned to Georgia Standards of Excellence and identify which person(s) in the school will be responsible for this task.

13. Explain how the charter school will ensure all students participate in all state-mandated assessments. This answer should demonstrate the school's understanding of what assessments are mandatory, the process for administering assessments including the State's expectations for online administration, how assessments results are used in student promotion and retention, and the describe school's plan to communicate these obligations to parents.

STATE AND FEDERALLY MANDATED SERVICES

Please note: Question 14 should address the following information:
the school's plans to evaluate and identify students with disabilities; to develop, review and revise IEPs; to integrate special education into the general education program; to deliver special education and related services; to ensure that the school facility meets the requirements of other related laws including the ADA and Section 504; to address student discipline; to handle programming disputes involving parents; to ensure confidentiality of special education records; to purchase services from special education vendors; and to secure technical assistance and training.

14. For students with disabilities, describe how the charter school will provide state and federally mandated services under both the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The school's proposed budget should reflect any costs associated with providing these services.

15. For English Learners (ELs), describe how the charter school will provide state and federally mandated services. The school's proposed budget should reflect any costs associated with providing these services.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

WAIVERS

16. If approved, the charter school will be granted the broad flexibility from law, rule, and regulation permitted by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(a). Provide illustrative examples of how the charter school will implement the flexibility to meet or exceed the performance-based goals and to increase student achievement.

DESCRIPTION OF GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

17. Describe how the governing board will comply with the provisions of O.C.G.A. §§ 50-14-1 et seq. and 50-18-70 et seq.

18. Describe how current governing board members were identified and selected.

19. Describe the governing board's function, duties and role in each of the following areas: a. Leadership, b. Goals, c. Budget, d. Policies, e. Legal Compliance, f. Oversight of School Administration, g. Fundraising

20. Starting a high-quality charter school can be extremely time consuming. Describe the amount of time each board member plans to allocate to this process. Describe the frequency of meetings and other communication.

21. Identify each member and describe the composition of the governing board, how and when future governing board members will be selected, how long each governing board member will serve, and how governing board members may be removed from office.

22. Describe how the governing board will ensure that current and future board members avoid conflicts of interest.

23. Describe how the governing board will ensure effective organizational planning and financial stability. If the board plans to utilize a subcommittee structure, briefly describe this structure and identify possible subcommittees.

24. Describe how the governing board will work positively with the local board of education.

Partnership with an Educational Service Provider (ESP)

26. Does the charter school intend to contract, or has contracted for, the services of an Educational Service Provider?

The SCSC defines an Educational Service Provider as: a nonprofit or for-profit organization that contracts with charter schools to provide multiple educational, operational, or comprehensive management services, including, but not limited to, curriculum design, instructional resources, professional development, financial and operational management, facilities management, or any combination thereof. Please note, a "yes" response will require you to upload a draft contract.

☐ Yes
☐ No

Identification and Selection of the ESP

27. Describe how the particular ESP was identified, selected, and how the contract will be in the best educational and financial interests of the charter school. Explain how the governing board will maintain its fiduciary responsibilities as the charter holder. The school's proposed budget should reflect any costs associated with the ESP.

Due Diligence

28. Describe the decision-making process and due diligence exercised by the founding/governing board in choosing to contract with the Educational Service Provider. If the ESP has previously worked in Georgia, provide a brief description of their performance track record in the state.

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

DEMONSTRATION OF FISCAL FEASIBILITY AND CONTROLS

29. Describe the level of autonomy the charter school will have over budgets and expenditures.

30. Describe the plans for ensuring that the charter school will be subject to an annual financial audit by an independent Georgia-licensed certified public accountant.

31. Identify the school's chief financial officer and describe how that person's credentials comply with requirements of the State Board of Education.

32. Appropriate segregation of duties is often a problem when starting a charter school due to limited personnel. Describe the steps that the charter school will take to ensure the appropriate segregation of duties to establish proper internal controls.

33. Describe how the school will fund planning and start-up operations prior to receiving state funding. (Ex: legal setup costs, facility identification costs, initial staffing costs)

34. Describe the charter school's plans for securing other sources of funding, including funding from corporations, individuals, foundations, philanthropic groups, or any other source.

35. Has the charter school already secured and identified as revenue on the budget other sources of funding, including funding from corporations, individuals, foundations, philanthropic groups, or any other source? Please note, a "yes" response will require you to upload proof of additional revenue.

☐ Yes
☐ No

DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS

36. Describe how the charter school intends to fulfill all responsibilities of acting as its own LEA, including but not limited to data collection and reporting, management of federal funds and programs and serving special student populations (e.g. students with disabilities). Your description should also include detail regarding what role at the school will be tasked with the management of each specific component. Please note that an upload of a 3-year staffing plan will be required at the end of the application. Additionally, the school's proposed budget should reflect any costs related to operating as an LEA.

37. Given the complexity of managing the operational aspects of a state charter school, describe how you will ensure your instructional leader remains focused on your academic program rather than on business and operations issues, such as data reporting, federal programs, and budget management.

38. Describe the rules and procedures concerning student discipline and student dismissal (including code of conduct and student due process procedures).

39. Describe the rules and procedures concerning how the school will address grievances and complaints from students, parents, and teachers, including the role the governing board will play in resolving such grievances and complaints.

40. Describe generally the charter school's employment procedures and policies.

41. State whether certification by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission will be required, and if not, describe the training and experience that will be required and the procedure for determining whether a teacher has demonstrated competency in the subject area(s) in which he/she will teach.

42. Describe whether the charter school will use the state salary schedule, and if another schedule will be used, provide that schedule. If the school will not utilize the state salary schedule, describe how the school will recruit and retain high-quality teachers. The school's proposed salary schedule should be reflected in the proposed budget.

43. Describe the charter school's procedures to ensure that staff members obtain clearance certificates as required by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

44. Describe whether transportation services will be provided and, if so, briefly describe the transportation program for the school. If transportation services are not provided, describe how this will not be a barrier to eligible students attending the school. The school's proposed budget should reflect any costs associated with providing transportation services if applicable.

45. Describe whether the charter school will provide food services (including participation in federal school meals programs), and if so, briefly describe the proposed food services programs. If food services are not provided, describe how this will not be a barrier to eligible students to attending the school. The school's proposed budget should reflect any costs associated with providing food services if applicable.

46. State whether the charter school will elect to participate in the State Health Benefit Plan as provided pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-880 and § 20-2-910. If the school will not participate in the State Health Benefit Plan, describe the process by which the charter school will obtain and provide health benefits to eligible employees.

47. Does the charter school have any agreements with other local schools or school systems for services that will be provided to the charter school, including for the charter school students' participation in extracurricular activities such as interscholastic sports and clubs. Please note, a "yes" response will require you to upload a copy of any agreements.

☐ Yes
☐ No

FACILITIES

48. Describe the school's facility plan. The facility plan should include a primary facility option and a contingency facility option. For each facility, the school should provide details regarding the specific location and a timeline with implementation plan that ensures the facility will meet health and safety standards and enable the school to meet the benchmark dates as established by the SCSC Pre-Opening Checklist. To the greatest extent possible, the school should include commitments, such as a contingent lease or MOU from the current facility owner. To the extent that such commitments have not been finalized, the petition should describe the steps the charter school is taking to pursue and finalize such commitments that will enable the petitioner to meet the deadlines as established by the SCSC Pre-Opening Checklist. Additionally, any expenses related to the facility should be reflected in the school's proposed budget. Petitions containing comprehensive and robust facility information will be evaluated more favorably than petitions containing scant information or mere promises to work with a vendor upon approval.

49. Describe any modifications necessary for utilizing the space for educational purposes.

50. Describe the actions the charter school will take to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy prior to students occupying the proposed facility.

51. Describe the actions the charter school will take to prepare a safety plan in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185 and submitting it to the local Emergency Management Agency.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND NEED

ATTENDANCE ZONE AND STUDENT ENROLLMENT

52. Describe the attendance zone for the charter school. Please note that this attendance zone should match the proposed attendance zone listed in the Petition Cover Page.

53. If you intend to pursue a statewide attendance zone, please provide a comprehensive justification and rationale. Indicators of the need for a statewide attendance zone include, but are not limited to: pre-enrollment of students from a large geographic area with multiple districts; multiple, widespread, documented marketing efforts, governing board representation from a large geographic area, a proposed facility well situated to serve a large geographic area or a comprehensive transportation plan to serve a large geographic area. This section should only be completed if you selected a statewide attendance zone on the Petition Cover Page.

54. Describe the rules and procedures that will govern the admission of students to the charter school. If the school would like to use a weighted lottery, please provide information regarding your planned comprehensive marketing efforts to ensure a diverse group of applicants. Efforts should include marketing plans.

55. Describe the steps that the school will take to reach students representative of the racial and socioeconomic diversity in the attendance zone for the charter school.

56. Describe the charter school's plan for recruiting students and for maintaining/increasing enrollment.

ENROLLMENT PRIORITIES

57. Rank each enrollment priority the charter school plans to utilize in accordance with Georgia law. If the charter school will not use a specific enrollment priority, you should select "n/a".

Each enrollment priority you will utilize should have a unique number (e.g. you may not rank two priorities using a "1").

	n/a	1	2	3	4	5
A sibling of a student enrolled in the start-up charter school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A sibling of the student enrolled in another local school designated in the charter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A student whose parent or guardian is a member of the governing board of the start-up charter school or is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee at the start-up charter school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A student matriculating from a local school designated in the charter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children who matriculate from a pre-kindergarten program which is associated with the school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

58. Describe how parents, community members, and other interested parties were involved in developing the petition and will be involved in the school, including involvement with the governing body of the school. This may include letters of support, signed petitions, sign-in sheets from town hall meetings discussing the proposal, or other indicia of community interest.

59. Do you have any business arrangements or partnerships with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, or nonprofit organizations?

☐ Yes
☐ No

60. List all business arrangements or partnerships with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, or nonprofit organizations and disclose any potential conflicts of interest. Provide a detailed summary of past and present interactions, including but not limited to meetings, pilot programs, and deliverables produced. **For partnerships to be considered as part of the school plan, you must include, at minimum, a Letter of Intent signed by the proposed partner committing monetary support or an in-kind service upon approval. Failure to do so will severely impact your school's chances for approval.** Please note, if you provide an answer to this question, you will be required to upload proof of these partnerships. If you do not have the requisite documentation, please leave this question blank.

PREVIOUS APPLICANTS ONLY

**This question requires an answer. If you were not previously denied, please indicate so in the text box.

61. If your application was previously denied by the SCSC, please describe how you utilized the feedback you received during the previous cycle to improve your application. Summarize the main differences between the current application and the previous application.

Budget Narrative

1. Using 500 words or less, provide a narrative for the school's proposed 100% enrollment budget. This narrative should address the school's plans for growth and fiscal viability throughout the school's charter term.

_____
_____
_____

2. Using 500 words or less, provide a narrative for the school's proposed 65% enrollment budget. This narrative should address what changes would be made in the event of significant under enrollment.

_____
_____
_____

Budget Submission Acknowledgement and Sign-off

Please acknowledge your understanding of the following:

☐ I acknowledge and affirm that I have used the FY 20 Budget Template as downloaded from this application. I understand that if I have changed or attempted to reproduce the template in anyway, that my application shall be rejected.
☐ I acknowledge and affirm that the budget template must be completed using Excel and will not function properly with the use of other programs, such as Google docs. Failure to use the Excel-based template and upload it as an .xlsx file shall result in the rejection of my application.
☐ I acknowledge and affirm that the budget template contains 5 separate tabs which I must complete. I understand that failure to complete all tabs in their entirety shall result in the rejection of my application.
☐ I acknowledge and affirm that grants, including the Federal Implementation Grant, should not be included unless they have already been awarded to the school. Inclusion of grant monies without documentation of award shall result in the rejection of my application.
☐ I acknowledge and affirm that only revenue that can be adequately assured should be included as "Additional Revenue". Although it is not necessary for revenue to be received to by the school to be included in the template, the school MUST have written evidence that the revenue will be provided upon receipt of a charter contract. Inclusion of additional revenue without sufficient documentation shall result in the rejection of my application.

Virtual Instruction Addendum

This form is to be completed only by a charter school that proposes to use virtual instruction to deliver instruction to students. This includes schools that propose to use solely virtual instruction as well as schools that proposed to use virtual instruction for a subset of students or courses. For those schools that will utilize virtual instruction for a subset of students or courses, this addendum should discuss only your virtual education instruction while your overall petition discusses your overall education program and how your school's virtual and non-virtual instruction will be aligned and combined into a cohesive model.

DESCRIPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

1. Describe the specific student instructional needs the virtual instructional program will meet (i.e., explain demonstrated needs, how course offerings meet those needs, etc.). _____

2. Provide any data that demonstrates the instructional needs stated above. _____

3. Describe the needs served by the proposed virtual instructional programthat currently are un-served or under-served by the Georgia Virtual School. _____

4. Describe the level of participation in instructional activities students will be required to meet to receive credit for successfully completing a course and receive a satisfactory grade for that course. The level of participation may include the amount of time students will be engaged in both online and other instructional activities in order to receive credit for a course. _____

5. Describe how cooperative and group learning activities will be integrated in the instructional program. _____

6. Describe how the instructional program will address different student needs and learning styles. _____

7. Describe procedures to ensure the integrity and authenticity of student work product and assessment scores. _____

8. Describe the intervention procedures the virtual instructional programwill take when students fail to provide authentic work product or assessment responses. _____

9. Describe what role parents/guardians will have in promoting accountability. _____

10. Describe how virtual instruction and activities will be geared to develop and nurture social needs of students. _____

11. Describe any extracurricular activities that will be offered to develop and nurture the social needs of students. _____

STATE AND FEDERALLY MANDATED SERVICES

12. Describe how the charter school will identify students with special needs in the virtual environment and how the charter school will provide services to all enrolled students with special needs regardless of where the student resides. _____

13. Describe the charter school's procedures for ensuring that students with disabilities in the virtual program are identified and receive all services needed to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and related state and federal laws and regulations. _____

14. Describe the charter school's procedures for Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings for students with disabilities in the virtual program, including determining where such meetings will occur. _____

15. Describe how the charter school will implement ADA and Rehabilitation Act standards for accessibility to web-based curricula. _____

16. Explain how the charter school will accommodate English Learners (ELs) for students in the virtual program and address their unique needs in online and offline instruction and activities. _____

DESCRIPTION OF ASSESSMENT METHODS

17. Explain how the charter school will tailor its instructional approach during the pendency of its charter term if student achievement goals are not met in the virtual program. _____

18. Describe the charter school's plan for the administration of all required state assessments (e.g., Georgia Milestones) and other assessments set forth in the school's charter for students in the virtual program. The plan should address, among other things, test taking location(s), who will administer the tests, and test security procedures. _____

DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS

19. Describe the scope of the charter school's virtual program. (i.e. Will the school be solely virtual? Will certain courses or students be served in a virtual environment? If the latter, how will the school make that determination and adapt as necessary to meet the students' needs?) _____

20. Describe how the charter school will ensure or facilitate student attendance at any in-person school activities. _____

21. Explain how the charter school will screen teacher candidates to select faculty members that perform effectively in a virtual environment. _____

22. Describe what, if any, additional responsibilities will be required of teachers in the virtual environment (e.g. course development/design, research, website maintenance). _____

23. Describe how the charter school communicates responsibilities to teachers in the virtual instructional program. _____

24. Describe how the virtual charter will adhere to required teacher performance assessment measures and procedures (e.g. observing lessons, ensuring alignment of instruction to student needs, auditing student performance tracking instruments). _____

25. Identify any non-teacher faculty members (paraprofessionals, guidance counselors) and describe their roles and how they will function in the virtual in the virtual instructional program. _____

26. Describe professional development opportunities that the charter school will provide to maximize the faculty's effectiveness in a virtual environment. _____

27. Describe procedures to ensure compliance with providing instruction for the equivalent of 180 days in the virtual instructional program. _____

28. Describe the charter school's policies regarding truancy, absence, and withdrawal. _____

29. Describe the intervention procedures the charter school will take when students are not participating as required in the virtual instructional program. _____

30. Describe all technological equipment and services that the charter school will provide, including hardware, software, connectivity, and media storage devices. _____

31. Specify any equipment that students and families will be responsible for obtaining. _____

32. Describe any technological support for which students and families will be responsible. _____

33. Describe the scope of technical support that will be provided, including where support staff will be located, and the hours (including weekends and holidays) and manner in which the support will be accessible to students and families. _____

34. Describe the charter school's data retention and confidentiality procedures. _____

35. Describe the charter school's Acceptable Use Policy. _____

36. Describe procedures to deliver instruction when equipment, software, or connectivity at any location is lost or impaired. _____

37. Describe data protection and recovery procedures in event of catastrophic system failure. _____

38. Describe how the charter school will provide for the health and safety of students and staff both in virtual and offline activities. _____

39. Describe how the virtual charter school will address the nutritional needs of students when appropriate. _____

PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

40. Indicate the nature, frequency, and location of all required in-person meetings between parents and charter school faculty, such as parent/teacher conferences. _____

41. Indicate the nature and frequency of all optional opportunities for in-person meetings and interactions, such as open houses and school community meetings. _____

42. Describe the procedures for parents to contact charter school faculty and administrators with concerns of any nature and the procedures for prompt and helpful responsiveness to such communications. _____

43. Explain how charter school administration will communicate with non-English speaking parents/guardians. _____

Conflict of Interest Form and Applicant History

Instructions: This form must be completed by each governing board member of the nonprofit organization that will hold the charter of the proposed state charter school as well as any individual holding administrative oversight over any aspect of school operations.

Conflict of Interest Form

If the answer to any question is “Yes,” the individual completing the form must include a written explanation in the text box below for each “Yes.” Failure to include the required explanation may result in rejection or denial of your application. For the purpose of this form, the term “immediate family member” means a spouse, child, sibling, or parent or the spouse of a child, sibling, or parent.

	Yes	No
1. Do or will you or an immediate family member have any contractual agreements with the proposed charter school?	☐	☐
2. Do or will you or your immediate family have any ownership interest in any educational service provider or any other legal entity contracting with the proposed charter school?	☐	☐
3. Did or will you or your immediate family lease or sell any real property or facilities to the proposed charter school?	☐	☐
4. Did or will you or your immediate family sell any supplies, materials, equipment, or other personal property to the proposed charter school?	☐	☐
5. Have you or your immediate family guaranteed any loans for the proposed charter school?	☐	☐
6. Are or will you or your immediate family be employed by the proposed charter school or one of its vendors or contractors?	☐	☐
7. Did you or your immediate family have any ownership interest in any corporation, partnership, or other entity which would answer “Yes” to any of the above questions?	☐	☐
8. Are you aware of any other board, group, or other entity that believes it has a right to control or provide input on votes that you will cast as a member of the governing board of the proposed charter school?	☐	☐
9. Do you currently serve as a member on the governing board of any other charter school?	☐	☐
10. To the best of your knowledge, is there any situation not described above that may create the appearance of a conflict of interest between you and the proposed charter school or that would make it difficult for you to discharge your duties or exercise your judgment independently and in the best interest of the proposed charter school?	☐	☐

Please explain any items to which you responded with "yes".

_____

_____

_____

Applicant History

1. Do you reside in a state other than Georgia?

☐ Yes
☐ No

2. Have you previously served on the governing board of or held an administrative position with any other charter school(s)?

☐ Yes
☐ No

3. Provide the name, location and authorizer of all charter schools you were previously affiliated with.

_____

4. Are all schools still operating as a charter school?

☐ All schools are still operating
☐ None of the schools are still operating
☐ Some schools are or are not operating

5. Did the school(s) close for academic reasons?

☐ Yes
☐ No

6. Did the school(s) close for financial reasons?

☐ Yes
☐ No

7. Did the school(s) close for other reasons?

☐ Yes
☐ No

8. During your tenure with the charter school(s), were you aware of any fraud or other criminal activity?

☐ Yes
☐ No

9. During your tenure with the charter school(s), were you aware of any accusations of fraud or other criminal activity?

☐ Yes
☐ No

10. For schools that are still operational, please describe your current involvement or provide an explanation regarding why you are no longer involved.

_____

Please explain any items to which you responded with "yes".

_____
_____
_____

My signature below indicates that I do solemnly swear or attest under penalty of law that the information provided herein is accurate, complete, true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I acknowledge that this information is subject to verification or auditing at any time by the State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia, the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts, or the Governor's Office of Student Achievement. Falsifying, misrepresenting or knowingly omitting any of information in this document may result in criminal, civil, or administrative penalties, including disciplinary action under the Code of Ethics for Educators.

Name of the Proposed Charter School:

_____

Date

_____/____/____(YYYY/MM/DD)

Name _____

Title _____

Failure to disclose a Conflict of Interest or pertinent Applicant History may result in a recommendation to deny the petition before the SCSC.

Form: Petition Contents

Upload Certificate of Incorporation*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload copy of By-laws*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload Resumes*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload Agreements with Third-Parties*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload Agreements Reflecting Any Partnerships*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload Budget Template: 100% projected student enrollment*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload Budget Template: 65% projected student enrollment*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload Documentation of Additional Revenue*	*Upload a document/image*
Budget Narrative*	*Fill out a form*

Upload LEA Staffing Plan*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload School Year Schedule*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload Daily Schedule*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload Agreements with Local Districts/Schools*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload Facility Information*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload a Copy of Admissions Application*	*Upload a document/image*
Upload Additional Information	*Upload a document/image*
Virtual Instruction Addendum*	*Fill out a form*
Form: Virtual Instruction Addendum	
Conflict of Interest Form #1*	*Fill out a form*