

State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

Summary of Findings and Recommendation Commission Charter Application for Expedited Review

School:	<p>Charter Conservatory for Liberal Arts and Technology (CCAT) located in Statesboro, Georgia</p> <p>CCAT opened as a state-chartered special school in 2001, received a charter from the former Charter Commission in 2009, and transitioned back to a State-Chartered Special School in 2011.</p> <p>The mission of CCAT is “to create an environment that fosters a life-long love for learning, embracing home, community and world, and in which students ultimately assume responsibility for their own learning.”</p>
Attendance Zone:	Bulloch County
Grade Levels Served:	Grade 6 – Grade 12
Recommendation:	<p>It is recommended that the State Charter School Commission approve a charter for the CCAT for a three-year term to run from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2016.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> CCAT was granted a five-year charter term to run from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2018 by the State Board of Education in 2012. A shorter term is recommended for approval by the Commission because of the school’s performance track record that dates back over a decade. The school has had a history of governance issues that contributed to under-enrollment and mixed academic results (more details included in the summary of findings below); however, CCAT remains comparable to the State and Bulloch County in the areas of Reading and English Language Arts, and the school regularly graduates students at a higher rate than Bulloch County. As a result, a three-year term is recommended and will allow adequate time to evaluate whether or not the school’s recent governance changes will enable meaningful and observable change.</p>

Summary of Findings: Academics (Educational Plan)

CCAT serves a sixth through twelfth-grade population organized in multi-age, student-centered classrooms featuring a constructivist and multiple intelligence pedagogy that promotes academic achievement in a variety of ways. CCAT currently serves 140 students and expects to serve 175 students by the fifth year of a new charter term.

CCAT has established rigorous performance-based goals and measurable objectives designed to improve student achievement that directly relate to increased performance on the CRCTs, EOCTs, the GHSGT (until phase out), the GHSWT and the ITBS. These academic goals and objectives include achieving standards that exceed those of the district and state. CCAT also has established goals related to daily attendance, community service, fiscal feasibility and governing board effectiveness. CCAT students had mixed academic results, but have made AYP in two out of the last three years. Although AYP was not calculated for the 2011-2012 school year, the Charter Conservatory for Liberal Arts and Technology experienced improvement in Science and Social Studies performance. The school remains comparable to the State and Bulloch County in the areas of Reading and English Language Arts. Math continues to be a challenging area for the school, but the school has put a number of interventions into place to address Math scores, including personnel changes, additional teacher professional development, and remediation for those students who are struggling.

Capacity (Organizational Plan)

CCAT has maintained consistent enrollment since it opened in 2001; however, the school's enrollment level has always been low. Historically, demand for the school has not exceeded CCAT's capacity; although, the school does anticipate doing an admissions lottery this spring because—for the first time in many years—CCAT has reached the maximum enrollment levels in multiple grades. Additionally, the governing board is currently creating a strategic plan for the next five years that will contemplate a facility change. The current facility will not accommodate significant enrollment growth.

In the 2012-2013 school year, CCAT replaced its director and two governing board members in an effort to improve both academic and operational performance. Since July 2012, CCAT's enrollment has increased by 19%. The school's governing board has also committed to attending annual training on governance roles, responsibilities, and best practices.

Significant Changes from Previous Charter

All academic goals have been updated to reflect the state-wide change in federal accountability. New goals are aligned with the state performance targets and the College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI).

Annual enrollment targets have been increased to accommodate more students and ensure increased organizational viability.

Additional Assurances:

CCAT completed GaDOE's full petition review process (requesting renewal) within the last year, and was recommended for renewal by GaDOE staff in 2012.