

Peachtree Charter Middle School

Charter School Name _____Peachtree Charter Middle School _____

Type ___Conversion (DeKalb County School District)_____ (Locally-approved Start-up, State Chartered Special School, Career Academy, Jointly Authorized, Virtual)

Approved by the ___DeKalb County School District___ **Board of Education on** _____, 2015

Grade Levels Served _____6-8_____

Ages Served _____11-15_____

Proposed Opening/Renewal Date _____7/1/2016_____

Proposed Charter Term _____5 years_____ (If this is a renewal petition with a term other than 5 years requested, please give the rationale for the requested term length)

Mission Statement: Through a spirit of teamwork, Peachtree Charter Middle School supports students in realizing their academic and personal dreams.

For each year of the proposed charter term, please indicate the number of pupils the charter school plans to serve.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Yr 1							556	462	482					1500
Yr 2							526	556	462					1544
Yr 3							677	526	556					1759
Yr 4							703	677	526					1906
Yr 5							709	703	677					2089

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Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1(e)(2), please complete the following Affidavit. A list of secure and verifiable documents can be found on our website. This form should be completed by the CEO or President of the Non-profit Corporation.

O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1(e)(2) Affidavit

By executing this affidavit under oath, as an applicant for a charter school contract, as referenced in O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1, from the State Board of Education, the undersigned applicant verifies one of the following with respect to my application for a public benefit:

- 1) I am a United States citizen.
- 2) I am a legal permanent resident of the United States.
- 3) I am a qualified alien or non-immigrant under the Federal Immigration and Nationality Act with an alien number issued by the Department of Homeland Security or other federal immigration agency.

My alien number issued by the Department of Homeland Security or other federal immigration agency is _____.

The undersigned applicant also hereby verifies that he or she is 18 years of age or older and has provided at least one secure and verifiable document, as required by O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1(e)(1), with this affidavit.

The secure and verifiable document provided with this affidavit can best be classified as:

_____.

In making the above representation under oath, I understand that any person who knowingly and willfully makes a false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation in an affidavit shall be guilty of a violation of O.C.G.A. § 16-10-20, and face criminal penalties as allowed by such criminal statute.

Executed in Dunwoody (city), Georgia (state).

/s/ Frances Fuller
Signature of Applicant

Printed Name of Applicant

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN
BEFORE ME ON THIS THE
___ DAY OF _____, 20___

NOTARY PUBLIC
My Commission Expires:

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CONVERSION CHARTER PETITION REQUIREMENTS

All conversion charter petitions that are submitted by a charter petitioner to the local Board must meet the additional petition requirements:

- a. **Include a statement, and evidence, that the petitioner has held the appropriate votes, by secret ballot, required pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064, and shall describe the procedures and outcomes of those votes. For the purposes of the vote required pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064 (a)(1)(A), each faculty or instructional staff member shall have a single vote.**

The vote of the parents was held on February 5, 2016, from 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. at Peachtree Charter Middle School and of the faculty on January 4, 2016, at a specially called meeting, all in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064 and “Eligibility Requirements and Procedures for Conversion & High School Cluster Petition Votes, dated 6/18/15” (from DCSD). Details of the vote and procedures are included in Appendix A.

- b. **A conversion charter petition shall include a statement detailing the flexibility that the conversion school shall have from the District. This statement is, of necessity, a summary of the more detailed petition. Petition references listed herein shall be considered a part of the petitioner statement.**

Peachtree Charter Middle School, a successful charter school for the last 14 years, proposes innovations in governance, scheduling and curriculum which will, among other things, engage stakeholders in meaningful governance of and service to PCMS; enable PCMS faculty to have control over benchmarking, grading, pacing, and instructional material; enable students to earn up to four high school credits while in middle school; engage all students in a STEM focused initiative, including providing a STEM Academy for interested 8th graders; and enable ELL students to receive language arts instruction at their ACCESS tier rather than their grade level. PCMS reserves the right to establish criteria for eligibility for the High Achiever program that may not be the same as established by DCSD. PCMS seeks both academic and financial flexibility from DCSD in order to pursue its goals. The three major innovations requiring waivers from state law and DCSD and state policies or procedures are:

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- **Innovation in Curriculum:** implementing a STEM program that uniquely suits and helps to grow the current strengths of PCMS, including allowing 8th grade STEM students the opportunity to leave PCMS with up to four high school credits.
- **Innovation in Scheduling:** changing how teachers and students interact and use their time – responding to the diverse learning needs of all PCMS students, leading to proficiency in subject matter.
- **Innovation in Governance:** changing planning and decision-making to grow involvement and engagement by all stakeholders in PCMS, utilizing their professional skills and personal strengths.

1. A description of how resources will be managed.

Resources will be managed by the PCMS Principal and the Board of the PCMS Foundation (the “Board”). The Board does not intend to decrease the authority of the principal, but will provide input in decision making.

2. How human resources will be managed and personnel evaluated

PCMS personnel will remain DCSD employees and as such will be managed and evaluated per DCSD policy. Exceptions related to the selection and evaluation of the Principal are outlined in Appendix H.

3. The extent to which parents, community members, and other stakeholders will participate in the governance of the school

Parents, community members, and faculty and staff will participate in the governance of PCMS through the Board, including through its committees under the Parent-Teacher Charter Council (the “PTCC”), and through its Partners in Education.

4. Any other innovative practices the school intends to implement

PCMS will work in partnership with DCSD to develop and implement procedures so that DCSD is able to identify actual costs at the school level and define system modifications to permit tracking at the school level. Underlying this statement is a spirit of partnership in which PCMS

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seeks to collaborate with DCSD to fulfill the terms of the charter contract. Being the first conversion charter school under the new SBOE charter policy requires new thinking and flexibility, as many things cannot be anticipated. PCMS believes it has proven to be a trusted partner over the past 14 years of charter terms and looks forward to continuing that role.

The petition shall describe all policies, procedures, and practices the school intends to implement and how this will materially distinguish the conversion school from the school's pre-conversion model.

In responding to the 2015 DCSD Charter School Petition Guidelines in this document, all policies, procedures and practices that PCMS intends to implement have been described, with the understanding that not all policy and procedure needs can be anticipated as state law, SBOE rules, and DCSD policies and procedures evolve. Implementing the innovations proposed in the petition will materially distinguish PCMS from its pre-conversion model in 2001 by allowing PCMS the academic flexibility and freedom from ever changing DCSD policies, and creating a 501(c)(3) Foundation to participate in the governance and financial support of PCMS. A representative, but not exhaustive, list of these differences is:

- A 501(c)(3) Foundation which participates in the governance and financial support of PCMS, together with a Parent-Teacher Charter Council which acts as the operational arm of the Foundation
- An 8th grade STEM Academy whose students are able to earn up to four high school credits (foreign language, math, science, and engineering) and which has a flexible day/grouping schedule based on projects and the individual needs of students
- The ability to determine benchmarking, pacing, grading, and instructional resources which support the needs of the PCMS students without regard to changing policies of DCSD
- Language arts instruction for ELL students based on ACCESS tiers rather than academic grade
- STEM focus for all grades including an integrated STEM activity every nine weeks

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Executive Summary

Charter School Name **Peachtree Charter Middle School**

Vision Statement

“Et discite a schola ubi omnis studiosum ius spiritualem illorum.”

A school where every student is inspired to learn and empowered to excel.

Mission Statement

Through a spirit of teamwork, Peachtree Charter Middle School supports students in realizing their academic and personal dreams.

Grade Levels and Ages Served:

Peachtree Charter Middle School (“PCMS”) is a DeKalb County School District (“DCSD”) conversion charter school, and is a nonsectarian, nonreligious, nonprofit school organized and operated under the laws of the State of Georgia, which is not home-based and which is located in the facility listed herein.

PCMS shall not discriminate against students on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status or for special educational services.

Furthermore, PCMS shall not discriminate on any basis that would be illegal if used by a school system.

Peachtree serves approximately 1,500 students ages 11-15 in grades 6 through 8.

Original Opening Date July 1, 2001

Term of the Charter: This Charter shall commence on July 1, 2016 and shall expire at midnight, June 30, 2021, unless terminated pursuant to the terms hereof.

Innovation and Flexibility

Peachtree Charter Middle School’s original innovations have, over time, become standards for our county school system. Now we want to raise the bar and continue to operate beyond the bounds of a traditional public school. Our goal is to elevate student achievement through nontraditional use of the school schedule, professional instructors, community resources, and curricula and materials. Students do not fit into cookie cutter molds. We will offer a diversified curriculum to meet the needs of all levels of learners. We are going to incorporate a STEM Academy into our curriculum to challenge our high-

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achieving learners giving students an opportunity to graduate middle school with four high school credits. The STEM emphasis will continue with the introduction of HATponics, a sustainable agriculture system, at all grade levels (further description can be found in the Appendix). We will also restructure our English Learner classes by delivering English/Language Arts instruction through classes where EL students are grouped according to their ACCESS tiers rather than the traditional grade level groupings. Peachtree will utilize the STAR Reading and Math universal screeners to identify students who need additional support in reading and math. These lowest performing students will be “triple dosed” in reading and/or math using core instruction time, ELT, and connections. We bring together almost 1500 different learners and push them towards relatively narrow state and national standards for performance. The solutions to achieving success must be as flexible and diverse as our students.

The Principal, Board of the Peachtree Charter Middle School Foundation (the “Foundation”), and Executive Council of the Parent Teacher Charter Council (the “PTCC”) will monitor, survey, research, and obtain funding as necessary for strategies designed to meet the needs of our students, even those that depart from traditional DeKalb County resources and programs. We will exercise our Charter flexibility to select programs and curricula which fit the needs of our students and diverse population. Further details on the requested flexibility are contained within this Petition.

Academic Progress, Student Growth, & CRCT/Georgia Milestones Scores

During the previous charter term, PCMS met AYP requirements in all years but 2011. In 2012, the State of Georgia began using the College Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) for the evaluation of schools. As indicated in the chart below, PCMS outperformed the averages for the State of Georgia and DeKalb County in every year since the CCRPI was implemented.

CCPRI Year	PCMS	DeKalb	Georgia
2012	81	73.5	73.8
2013	72.8	59.9	74.6
2014	80.2	65.5	73.8

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The academic goals of the charter were to increase the percentage of students scoring meets/exceeds on the CRCT. The charter goals were established in accordance with NCLB which required 100% of the students to meet or exceed standards on the CRCT by 2014. PCMS established targets to meet this requirement. While the charts below show that we did not achieve the established goals, progress has been made in achieving these goals over the term of the charter. The 2015 school year does not have available data because the state changed the assessment tool.

English Meets/ Exceeds	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Charter Goal	95	96	98	100	100
Actual	91.9	93.6	94.9	93.2	N/A

Math Meets/ Exceeds	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Charter Goal	88	92	96	100	100
Actual	81.9	85.9	83.3	84.3	N/A

Governance Structure

Parents are involved in decision-making and school governance through the Foundation and the PTCC.

During our years as a charter school, we have seen increased parental involvement with the school.

Research shows that parental involvement is a key indicator of a student’s academic and personal success.

The governance structure of Peachtree includes the building level leadership, the Board of the Foundation and the PTCC Executive Council. The primary responsibility of the Principal is the daily operation of the school. The Foundation’s primary responsibility is the long-term educational goals, community involvement, fiscal support of the school, and oversight of the PTCC Executive Council, which is the operating arm assisting the principal with the daily operations of the school. The charter of Peachtree Charter Middle School is held by the Peachtree Charter Middle School Foundation, a non-profit organization.

Finance

Primary funding for PCMS is provided by DCSD. The 2014-15 PCMS school audit conducted by DCSD showed financial stability. No exceptions were found. The Foundation provides supplemental funds through an Annual Fund campaign and maintains a \$100,000 Reserve Fund. Neither a Breach of Contract Notice nor termination proceedings were issued or initiated with respect to the current charter.

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CHARTER APPLICATION

(All question numbers are in accordance with the DCSD Charter Petition guidelines. These numbers may not always correspond with those from the State Charter Petition guidelines.)

I. THE CASE

1. Why do you want a charter?

a. What is your motivation for applying to be a charter school?

Our goal is to elevate student achievement through nontraditional use of the school schedule, highly-qualified instructors, community resources, and curricula and materials. PCMS needs the flexibility of charter status to best serve our diverse population (see chart below).

Demographics	<u>State of Georgia</u> (from 2014 CRCT Report)	<u>DCSD</u> (from 2014 CRCT Report)	<u>Peachtree Charter Middle School</u> (2015-16 enrollment)
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.1%	4%	8%
Black	37.5%	74.2%	15%
Hispanic	9.9%	9.2%	28%
American Indian/Alaskan	0.2%	0.1%	.01%
White	45.9%	9.8%	46%
Multiracial	3.3%	2.7%	3%

PCMS has been operating as a conversion charter since 2001. Since the latest renewal in 2010, the student population has increased by 16% and the Hispanic population has increased by 8%. Despite these changes, student performance has continued to increase. Petitioner believes this is due in large part to the academic flexibility accorded to PCMS under the existing charter. Because of the existing charter, PCMS has been able to determine, among other things, the pacing, benchmarking, and grading which it believes is integral to student success. Over the last 14 years, PCMS has been consistent in its academic growth despite the ever changing personnel, policies and procedures of DCSD. Without the protection of the existing charter, this would not have been possible. There are

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numerous examples of DCSD mandated changes which PCMS believed would be to the detriment of its students, but which PCMS was able to avoid because of the protection afforded by the existing charter. In order to continue on the path of increased student achievement, PCMS needs to maintain its present academic freedom and remain free of the constantly changing policies and procedures of DCSD and its one size fits all approach.

- b. What will you be able to do with a charter that you cannot do without a charter?

Peachtree Charter Middle School seeks a broad flexibility with respect to the structural autonomy of the school. It seeks a limited flexibility waiver with respect to the financial autonomy of the school. As indicated in paragraph 1.a. above, PCMS has already had experience with policies and procedures which DCSD would have imposed upon PCMS had the charter not been in effect to allow PCMS to waive out of such requirements.

The school's original innovations of daily world language and physical education instruction continue to be part of the ongoing curriculum. PCMS has expanded the role of physical education in the school by originally partnering with Georgia State University – HOPE (Health Optimizing Physical Education) to provide funding for both before and after school intramurals led by the physical education faculty. Now we want to exceed the bar and continue to operate beyond the bounds of a traditional public school. We bring together more than 1,500 different learners, over 25% of whom come from homes where English is not the primary language, and push them towards relatively narrow state and national standards for performance. The solutions to achieving success must be as flexible and diverse as our students.

We are incorporating a STEM Academy into our course options so that 8th grade students interested in careers in those fields will have the opportunity to leave middle school with up to four high school credits (science, engineering, math, and foreign language). The Academy goes beyond simple coursework or units connecting science, technology, engineering, and math. Students in the Academy will pre-test each unit of instruction. If

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they demonstrate mastery of the unit through the pre-test, they will be able to use the instructional time to explore other subjects and areas. As a result, the actual county mandated “seat time” may be less in one subject and more in another. The program essentially creates a school within a school

In addition to the STEM Academy, PCMS will introduce a schoolwide STEM focus around the HATponics project (see Appendix F). Peachtree Charter Middle School will partner with HATponics Inc. as part of the STEM initiative. HATponics is dedicated to the advancement of sustainable agriculture education in the school system. HATponics provides custom-built aquaculture tanks with different types of grow beds, designed individually for the needs of each school. The aquaponic lab is a self-sustainable ecosystem to raise fish for fertilizer. The fertilizer will provide the nutrients needed to enhance the growth of our plants. Each grade level will have the opportunity to improve the system's functionality and resolve real-world problems such as food desertification. With this intense focus, PCMS hopes to become the first middle school in Georgia to receive schoolwide STEM certification.

PCMS will restructure our English Learner classes. Traditionally students in middle school take courses based on their current grade level. To better meet the needs of the EL students, we will build the EL classes for English/Language Arts based on students ACCESS tiers instead of grade. ELL students will be grouped by Language Proficiency Performance Bands. ELL teachers will analyze ACCESS data in order to group students across and within grade levels. ELL teachers will create language development goals to provide students an opportunity to move from one AMAO Progress band to the next.

PCMS will utilize the STAR Reading and Math universal screener scores to identify students needing additional support in reading and math. Once identified, the Extended Learning Time for students will be adjusted to meet their strengths or deficiencies.

Additionally, students scoring in the bottom 25% on either STAR Reading or STAR Math

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will be assigned to math or reading support classes so they receive a “triple dosing” of the content – core class, ELT, and connections.

In order to provide an instructional environment which best meets the needs of its students, PCMS will determine the curriculum pacing, grading policies, and benchmark tests for its students, with the Georgia Standards of Excellence as the guiding curriculum, but heavily supplemented with integrated STEM activities. In addition, Peachtree will be able to select the instructional resources which best meet the needs of its students.

PCMS needs to have increased site flexibility with staff contractual hours including after-hours conferences, Saturday academic remedial/enhancement programs for students, inclement and evening community programs in order to allocate staff support at the times most needed for the students.

Students need the knowledge and exposure gained from learning on field trips. As a result, PCMS may schedule field trips at any point from the start of school until the end of school.

c. Describe how parents, community members, and other interested parties were involved in developing the petition and will be involved with the school.

i. Describe in detail the community support for this school and the need for this particular school in the community it will serve.

Support for the initial conversion charter petition was evidenced beginning in 1999.

This support has continued through each of the charter renewals. The Charter Renewal Committee for this petition began meeting in the spring of 2014 and consisted of eight parents and fourteen members of the staff. To best serve the diverse population of PCMS, the community needs a school with the added flexibility a charter will provide.

ii. Requirement to provide a copy of the petition signed by parents/guardians of school-age children eligible to attend the charter demonstrating they would consider enrolling their child in PCMS

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As a conversion charter, all students in the Dunwoody Cluster attendance zone attend PCMS. These students have no other public middle school option and therefore, this requirement is not applicable.

- iii. Describe the steps you have taken to develop any partnerships and your plans to further develop additional community partnerships.

Through the efforts of the Foundation and the PTCC, PCMS has connected with 14 Partners in Education (listed in iv below). The Foundation will seek financial support from additional local businesses and organizations in order to provide educational enhancements such as USA Test Prep programs, reading materials, staff development and First in Math; however, as a DCSD conversion charter, PCMS is not dependent on the financial support from any outside organization to operate the school.

PCMS also seeks partners to support the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) initiative and certification process.

- iv. A list of the organizations that have committed to partner with PCMS and the potential nature of the partnerships is listed below. Evidence of support from the partners is attached in Appendix E.

PCMS currently has 14 Partners in Education that support the operation of the school by providing services. In turn, PCMS advertises our partners in the school and to the community by recognizing them in the weekly newsletter and on the school marquee. PCMS Partners in Education include: Bank of North Georgia, Chik-fil-A, Domino's, Huntington Learning Center, Jersey Mike's-Dunwoody, Kaplan Orthodontics, Kroger-Orchard Park, Northside Hospital, Pearle Vision-Perimeter, Plantation South of Dunwoody, Rita's Italian Ice, Rotary of Dunwoody, Shane's Rib Shack and Subway-Dunwoody Hall. PCMS has benefitted by these partnerships through direct donation of money and supplies as well as being provided with the opportunity to host fundraising events at many of these locations.

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PCMS also currently partners with the Navy's SeaPerch program, Georgia Institute of Technology Research Institute, and HATponics Sustainable Agriculture. These organizations provide opportunities for educational competitions, materials, curriculum development and other on-going support for the STEM initiative.

- d. What is the mission of PCMS? How does it support the legislative intent of the school's program to "increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation?"

Through a spirit of teamwork, Peachtree Charter Middle School supports students in realizing their academic and personal dreams. Peachtree strives to be an innovative model of academic excellence that prepares students to thrive in an evolving world.

In support of this mission, PCMS implements a curriculum that discovers and supports the special characteristics and unique learning styles of each student, helping them to recognize their abilities and build upon their strengths.

PCMS also challenges students in all areas of development. Through rigorous academic and enrichment programs, we encourage our students to become compassionate individuals and critical thinkers able to communicate their ideas.

Charter status allows the flexibility needed to schedule a range of exploratory opportunities for students by allowing them to participate in music, technology, and year-long physical education. In addition, 7th and 8th grade students are provided the opportunity to pursue a foreign language path which, if satisfactorily completed, earns a high school credit. As a result, students develop skills and explore interests that engage them in school and promote lifelong learners. Research shows that students who are more engaged in school perform better academically and have improved school attendance. Year-round physical education promotes healthier students who are then better prepared for class and for a healthier life as adults.

- e. Specific examples and documentation regarding programs that would be offered by PCMS that are not offered in any existing schools in DCSD.

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A list of specific examples of programs that will be offered at PCMS that are not offered in any existing schools in DCSD is provided below. Further documentation is provided in Appendix F.

- Yearlong art class for HS credit
- HS Physical Science for 8th grade STEM Academy students
- HS Engineering for 8th grade STEM Academy students
- ELL grouping based on ACCESS scores rather than academic grade level
- HATponics – UN Build (Hydroponics, Aquaponics, and Terraponics farming methods) – STEM program for all grade levels
- Sports: Soccer (spring) and Volleyball (fall) for students not eligible to play at the high school JV level

II. ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES, PLANS, AND WAIVERS

2. What are the PCMS performance objectives for the proposed charter term?

PCMS acknowledges that in addition to the objectives set forth below, the CCRPI and Beating the Odds goals identified in Attachment B are made part of this charter contract.

- a. Increase by 2% per year the percentage of 8th grade students passing all core content areas (ELA, math, science, and social studies) AND scoring proficient or higher on all Georgia Milestones.

Baseline 2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
73.6	no data available	75.6	77.6	79.6	81.6

- b. The average of the Achievement Gap Change scores as indicated on the CCRPI will increase by 2% each year.

Baseline 2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
73%	no data available	75%	77%	79%	81%	83%

The baseline score is taken from the 2013-14 CCRPI data.

- c. The average of the Achievement Gap Size score as indicated on the CCRPI will increase by 3% each year.

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Baseline 2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
40%	no data available	43%	46%	49%	52%	55%

The baseline score is taken from the 2013-14 CCRPI data.

The goals listed in sections a, b, and c in large part revolve around the same underlying causes.

The following strategies are designed to address each of these goals.

- Students scoring below the 25th percentile in reading or math on the STAR universal screener will be placed in an additional math or reading class during ELT and an additional math or reading support class during connections.
 - ELT reading and/or math support for all students will be targeted at the weakest areas identified by the STAR diagnostic report.
 - Conduct Parent Academies targeting families of students scoring below the 25th percentile in reading or math on the STAR universal screener inviting them to participate in sessions regarding parental engagement in education.
 - Conduct student led conferences using portfolios to have students monitor progress towards standards in core classes.
 - Teachers will hold a minimum of two tutorial sessions per week.
 - EL learners will receive English/Language Arts support in classes grouped around ACCESS scores rather than assigned grade level.
 - EL learners will be provided additional support through twice weekly after school tutorials.
- d. Increase by 2% per year the percentage of 8th grade students earning one or more high school credits AND scoring at proficient or higher on all Georgia Milestones.

Baseline 2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
29.6	no data available	31.6	33.6	35.6	37.6

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- Establish a STEM Academy for 8th grade students in which students will earn a minimum of two high school credits.
 - Provide a yearlong art course for 8th grade students in which students will earn a high school credit.
- e. The average score for Standard 8 – Academically Challenging Environment on the Survey of Student Instructional Practices will increase by .05 each year.

PCMS recognizes students learn best when expectations for learning are high. Currently, student’s perception of this is measured by the results of the Survey of Student Instructional Practices. Using this .05 growth rate, PCMS school-wide scores for Standard 8 should be as follows:

Baseline 2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
2.17	2.22	2.27	2.32	2.37	2.42

- Using weekly content level meetings, teachers will identify strategies they currently use which interfere with the creation of an academically challenging environment.
- Using weekly content level meetings, teachers will identify strategies which they can begin using to increase the academic challenge of the class. At subsequent meetings, they will report their personal experiences with the strategy and discuss the impact of its use.
- During instruction, teachers will use academic vocabulary appropriate to their subject.
- Using monthly grade level professional learning communities, teachers will examine personal behaviors which convey negative expectations to students and based on this self-assessment develop strategies to create an environment which encourages students to have high expectations for themselves.
- Peer coaching will be provided to faculty members whose Standard 8 score is below 1.6.

3. How will the PCMS governing board, management, instructional leadership, faculty and staff know that students are on track to meet these academic goals?

- a. What assessments will the school administer to obtain performance data for each student.

Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) or other similar nationally normed test
Cognitive Abilities Test (CoGAT) or other similar test of cognitive abilities
EOG Milestones or other such assessment as may be mandated by the Georgia DOE
EOC Milestones or other such assessment as may be mandated by the Georgia DOE
PSAT
ACCESS or such other assessment as may be mandated by state or federal regulations
GAA or other such assessment as may be mandated by the Georgia DOE
STAR Math or other similar nationally normed test
STAR Reading or other similar nationally normed test
Teacher designed pre and post unit assessments
Classroom tests and quizzes

PCMS administration and staff will use the assessments listed above to establish baseline data, set academic performance goals, and monitor student growth towards those goals. This will be examined for trends with respect to the school, an instructional team, an individual teacher, and an individual student.

- b. Describe how PCMS will obtain baseline achievement data.

All students will take the STAR universal screener during the first three weeks of school in order to gather the baseline data. In addition, faculty and administrative staff will examine the prior year's EOG Milestones when data is available. Administration and staff will also analyze data with respect to course completion of individual students.

- c. Describe how PCMS will benchmark student growth.

Continuous monitoring of student progress on the STAR universal screener will allow stakeholders, including the students themselves, to determine whether students are on track to meet their goals and growth targets. Each student will be expected to demonstrate progression towards a mean growth of 40% by the end of the academic year. Student conferencing at the end of each 4.5 week grading period will allow students, parents, and teachers to monitor the student's progress toward the goal of mastering subject level material and meeting course completion requirements.

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- d. Describe plans to formally and informally assess student performance in the core academic areas.

Student performance in all areas will be assessed both formally and informally through teacher and grade level department created instruments. The results of these assessments will be used to identify topics which need reinforcement or acceleration.

- e. How will PCMS work with the local school system to participate in all state-mandated assessments?

All state-mandated tests will be taken in accordance with state and district guidelines.

PCMS will honor the DCSD testing calendar.

- f. Describe plans to diagnose educational strengths and needs of students and plans on how this data will be used for instructional planning.

Please see paragraph 3.a. for information on instruments to be used to diagnose student strengths and weaknesses. Teachers individually and within the grade level department will examine this data to inform their instructional practices. As areas of need are identified (i.e., mathematics and measurement, science and vocabulary), administration and staff will seek out additional resources and professional development to address these deficiencies.

- g. Describe PCMS plans for using assessment data to monitor and improve achievement for all students over a set period of time.

As additional data is received over the course of the year, PCMS will adjust academic programs to meet the needs of the students. For example, PCMS will realign ELT groupings and math and reading support classes based on fall and winter STAR data.

- h. Describe how PCMS shall comply with the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. 20-14-30 through 20-14-41 and federal accountability requirements.

PCMS will take action to comply with accountability and assessment provisions of O.G.C.A. § 20-14-30 through § 20-14-41. Examples include but are not limited to:

- i. Providing for appropriate levels of interventions through activities such as tutoring, mentoring, remedial services, or specific research-based instructional practices for

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students at risk of not meeting state standards, including, when funds are available, Student Success tutors and tutorials for EL students through Title III.

- ii. Providing for intense remediation of students failing the EOG Milestones prior to their retest date, including Saturday school and in-school remediation blocks in lieu of regular academic classes.
- iii. Providing for “triple dosing” of instruction in the areas of reading and math through the core class, ELT, and reading or math tools during connections.
- iv. Providing appropriate levels of intervention for students needing enrichment such as differentiating instructional levels to provide more rigor or modifying assessment methods or expectations.
- v. Collecting appropriate data, analyzing the aggregated and disaggregated data, and utilizing the data to inform instructional practices.
- vi. Providing data requested by DCSD to support statewide reporting mandates and to support strategic planning for DCSD and oversight of PCMS.
- vii. Complying with any state performance audits conducted of DCSD schools and making data and stakeholders available for such audits.
- viii. Continuing to raise achievement and close the achievement gap by using data from statewide assessments such as CCRPI to set goals and action plans for improvement.
- i. Describe how PCMS will adhere to all assessment guidelines and procedures as outlined by the State Assessment Handbook, the State Accommodations Manual and other state and local guidance on assessment.

PCMS will comply with federal accountability requirements, and participate in all mandated statewide assessments. PCMS will adhere to all assessment guidelines and procedures as outlined by the State Assessment Handbook, the State Accommodations Model, and other state and local guidance on assessment.
- j. Describe how staff from PCMS will attend required test administration training held by DCSD.

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Staff from PCMS will attend required test administration training held by DCSD and administer such tests in compliance with the requirements set forth by the state and DCSD,

4. What specific actions will the PCMS management, instructional leadership, faculty and staff take to ensure student performance objectives are met during the proposed charter term?

Through staff development and innovative programming and scheduling, PCMS will ensure student performance objectives are met during the proposed charter. As further described throughout this Petition, PCMS intends to “triple dose” students in the lowest percentiles in reading and math so they receive instruction for three periods a day in their weakest areas. PCMS is instituting a STEM Academy and yearlong art where students enrolled in those courses can earn high school credits in Foundations of Engineering and Physical Science, in addition to any credit they may earn in a world language or math (if on the Accelerated Math path). A general description of the Foundations of Engineering, Physical Science, and yearlong art class can be found in Appendix F. The HATponics program described in Appendix F is a unique science program which involves all students, from resource students through gifted students, at all grade levels. This emphasis on science and math will include lab-based problem-solving activities building connections in all content areas and help us close the achievement gap between our subgroups. By grouping our EL learners by ACCESS scores rather than grades, we can help them move at a pace and in a manner more suited to their language development. These innovations are appropriate for PCMS because of the need to educate students from such diverse backgrounds. Because PCMS is not a Title I school and does not receive additional funding for afterschool remediation, the ability to allow the administration to provide teachers with flexible work hours in order to enable additional support outside of the regular school day is very important. Unless additional funds become available, PCMS will maintain the teacher-to-student ratios required by DCSD. PCMS will implement the Georgia Standards of Excellence as its guiding curriculum, but will be heavily supplemented with integrated STEM activities.

5. What are Peachtree's plans for educating special populations?

PCMS will educate all special populations in accordance with state and federal laws, rules and regulations related to serving students with special needs, including but not limited to: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Students with disabilities will be identified through the Student Support Team referral process currently in place. The team will consist of the SST Coordinator, the school psychologist; the lead teacher for special education ("LTSE"); a counselor; teachers; and the student's parents. Students who are identified as underperforming through the Response to Intervention (RTI) problem-solving process will be monitored in the general education environment. Research based interventions will be utilized by the classroom teacher and the intervention will be modified according to the student's progress and the response to the interventions. Referrals to SST may be made by teachers, counselors or parents.

Special education services will be provided to eligible students in compliance with all federal and state laws, rules and regulations. The LTSE will oversee the delivery of services to students with special needs. The student, their parent(s), teachers, counselor and itinerant specialists will work collaboratively to develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) detailing academic strengths, needs, services, parent concerns, transition plans, supports and accommodations, including those related to medical and dietary needs. Where appropriate, the IEP team will include a behavioral intervention plan as part of the overall IEP. Individualized goals will be set according to student needs and will be monitored by a special education teacher/case manager. Parents will receive documentation of their student's progress in meeting those goals whenever progress reports are issued. Meetings to update IEPs will be held at least annually or when a parent or teacher feels it in the best interest of the student. IEPs will be implemented as written, reviewed annually, and updated according to federal law. A continuum of services, such as one-on-one and small group instructional settings, will be provided for students with disabilities to ensure each student is

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provided with FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), and served in the least restrictive environment. Students with special needs will be assessed according to state requirements including Georgia Milestones, SLOs, and GAA, as appropriate. Students will receive both classroom and testing accommodations according to their IEPs. Students with special needs will continue to come from the PCMS attendance area as well as be eligible to be selected through PCMS charter school lottery.

The role of the teacher is of critical importance in the implementation of any IEP. As a result, PCMS teachers, as appropriate, will receive ongoing training in such areas as working in a collaborative classroom and de-escalation strategies.

6. Describe methods, strategies and/or programs for meeting the needs of students identified as gifted and talented. Include any diagnostic methods or instruments that will be used to identify and assess those students.

Gifted and talented students will be identified in accordance with state and federal laws and will be provided instruction in a content-based program by teachers who have gifted certification.

PCMS will continue to comply with DCSD policies for gifted and talented students. PCMS has a site-based Gifted Liaison who coordinates the identification and assessment of students, whether through the required testing of 7th grade or as requested for students who were not enrolled during the ITBS/Cogat testing in prior years in order to determine who may qualify for the gifted program. Seventh grade students will be administered the ITBS and CoGAT to identify students for placement in the gifted and talented program. Families new to DCSD may request special testing for the gifted and talented program after a six week residence at PCMS. Initially, identified students, whether through PCMS screening or prior elementary school placement, will be placed in gifted classes in the four core subjects (ELA, math, science, and social studies).

Failure to maintain a B or higher average in a subject for two consecutive semesters results in the removal of the student from the gifted class in that subject only.

The Gifted Liaison also works with the Assistance Principal of Instruction and the counselors to ensure the gifted services are delivered effectively. All students are eligible to be identified as

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gifted including ELL and Exceptional Education students, economically disadvantaged, and minority students. The Gifted Liaison schedules appropriate testing if the student and parent agree (SBOE 160-4-2-.38), monitors progress of students in the gifted program and, together with administration, encourages PCMS teachers to seek gifted certification. (PSC Rule 505-2.107)

For 8th grade students who have an identified gift as evidenced by a submitted portfolio and interest in art, a yearlong art class which provides a high school credit will be provided during one of the connections periods.

7. Describe how PCMS will provide state and federally mandated services for students with disabilities. Include any diagnostic methods or instruments that will be used to identify and assess those students.

PCMS will comply with all special education laws and regulations, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

In accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the IDEA, PCMS will do the following:

- Establish a Student Support Team (SST) in accordance with state guidelines and local school board policies and use DCSD forms for SST.
- Establish a Section 504 team in accordance with state guidelines and local school board policies and use DCSD forms for Section 504.
- Handle all discipline issues regarding Section 504 students in accordance with federal regulations, state guidelines, and local school board policies including the Code of Student Conduct.
- Participate in workshops, in-service and/or trainings offered by DCSD for persons serving as SST/Section 504 chairpersons and special education staff.
- Comply with Section 504 by providing the appropriate accommodations and equipment.

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- Immediately notify the DCSD Director of Charter Schools upon receipt of a complaint made by a parent/guardian or student concerning Section 504 and/or Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, furnish a copy of such complaint and cooperate fully in the investigation, defense and resolution of such complaint.

- Hire or contract certified special education teachers to provide services to eligible students. PCMS will utilize the services of DCSD to provide professional development training for the SST and 504 teams. As appropriate, PCMS may ask DCSD to provide technical/consultative assistance on these areas.

PCMS will adhere to all DCSD guidelines with regards to assessing students to determine needs for special education. In addition to an assessment by a psychologist from DCSD in the areas of emotional and social development, achievement, intelligence, and adaptive behaviors, data gathered during the RTI process including classroom work samples, observations and progress monitoring will be used to provide a more complete picture of the individual student's relative strengths and weaknesses. The totality of this information, together with input from parents, teachers, and school psychologists, will be used to determine whether, and what kind of, special education services are appropriate.

PCMS will monitor discipline issues regarding disproportionality and adhere to all state and federal guidelines regarding students with disabilities.

PCMS will follow all accommodations outlined in student 504 or individualized education plans.

8. Describe methods, strategies and/or programs for students receiving supplemental education services. These services should be provided pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03 and the ESEA/NCLB.

PCMS is not a Title 1 school; therefore, PCMS is not required to provide supplemental educational services as noted in SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03.

9. Describe methods, strategies and/or programs for meeting the needs of students at-risk of academic failures through remediation. Include any diagnostic methods or instruments that will be used to identify and assess those students who are performing below grade level as well as the processes/programs/tools to be used in providing them with remedial

instruction. These services should be provided pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01 and NCLB.

While PCMS is not a Title 1 school, it does provide supports designed to meet the needs of students at-risk of academic failure. These students may be identified through the STAR reading and math universal screeners, SST, teacher recommendation, or Milestones. These students receive 150 minutes of daily instruction in these weak areas – one period in the core subject, one period in ELT, and one period in math or reading support classes. Additionally, PCMS follows supports recommended through any SST process, best practices, and RtI. Progress for these students is monitored through the use of the STAR universal screeners, classroom grades, and teacher observations.

10. Describe how PCMS will provide state and federally mandated services for English Language Learners. Include any diagnostic methods or instruments that will be used to identify and assess those students.

All students whose native language, home language, or first language is other than English are screened for English language proficiency utilizing the W-APT, the state-adopted English proficiency measure (SBOE 160-4-5-.02). Appropriate support services for those students identified as not proficient according to these tests will be provided according to state and federal law. Students eligible for the Intensive English Language pullout program will be provided services by DCSD. Students qualifying for EL services, but not the intensive EL pullout program, will be provided English instruction according to their most recent ACCESS scores rather than their current grade level. ELL students will be grouped by Language Proficiency Performance Bands. ELL teachers will analyze ACCESS data in order to group students across and within grade levels. ELL teachers will create language development goals to provide students an opportunity to move from one AMAO Progress band to the next. Math instruction will be provided according to their STAR math scores and grade level. Instruction in the areas of math and English/Language Arts is provided according to the SIOP model. Sheltered instruction includes strategies such as cooperative learning, explicit, targeted vocabulary development,

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slower speech with clear enunciation and fewer idiomatic expressions, visuals, demonstrations, and hands on learning, text and homework adaptations, and supplementary materials. EL students will be taught in ELA and math in a pull out sheltered setting by faculty with an EL Certificate or endorsement. All other core subjects will be taught in an on grade level setting with their peers. All EL students are required to take the federally mandated ACCESS assessment which evaluates the extent students have met WIDA 2012-ELD. Linguistic progress will be measured through positive movement along the ACCESS performance bands. Eligibility to exit the program will be determined according to state and federal law. Those students who exit are monitored for an additional two years by the EL faculty. EL students will be included in all curricular and extracurricular activities at PCMS regardless of their ability to speak and understand the language of instruction.

11. List all proposed extracurricular activities or other auxiliary educational activities along with the grade levels in which these activities will be offered.

Entry fees for academic competitions and stipends for academic club sponsors are paid for by the PCMS Foundation. All afterschool activities are held on the PCMS grounds, except for competitions which may be held at the opponent's venue. Each activity has a faculty sponsor. Unless otherwise indicated, all activities are open to students in grades 6-8.

- Academic Quiz Bowl
- Art Club
- Blue Shadow Jazz Band
- Dance Club
- Drama Club
- Environmental Club
- Junior Beta
- Math Team
- No Place For Hate
- Odyssey of the Mind
- Patriot Press Newspaper
- Patriot TV
- Pep Band
- Reading Bowl
- SGA
- Science Olympiad
- SeaPerch Competition (8th grade)
- Ski/Snowboard Club
- Special Friends
- Yearbook

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- Club Soccer
- Club Volleyball
- Baseball
- Basketball (Boys)
- Basketball (Girls)
- Cheerleading – Basketball
- Cheerleading – Football (7th and 8th grade)
- Football
- Track (Boys)
- Track (Girls)

12. Which of the specific actions in the academic plan require a waiver of state law, rule, or guidelines?

PCMS seeks a broad flexibility waiver with respect to its academic plans. Pursuant to this waiver, PCMS will, among other things,

- a. select the learning resources, including textbooks, which best suit the needs of its students,
- b. establish a uniform procedure for evaluating and communicating student progress,
- c. award high school credit for high school courses based on a combination of classroom performance and EOC Milestones performance without regard to minimum seat time hours,
- d. establish any guidelines for qualification for high achiever classes (note: this is a unique designation for DCSD and is not the same as gifted qualification, the guidelines for which are established by the state).

Waiver – Instructional Materials – DCSD Policy IFA, IFA-R(2) – PCMS requests a waiver of the required use of DCSD-mandated learning resources. Using moneys allocated by DCSD for textbooks, PCMS may purchase learning resources on the schedule and from the vendors it believes best serves the students of PCMS. PCMS does not ask for a waiver of State BOE Rule 160-4-4-.10(3) regarding Minimum Requirements for Publishers.

Waiver – Grading Systems – DCSD Policy IHA – PCMS requests a waiver of any DCSD mandated grading policies. PCMS will develop and implement a uniform procedure for

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evaluating and communicating student progress in accordance with what it believes is in the best interests of the PCMS students.

Waiver – Awarding Units and Transferring Credit – Georgia BOE Rule 160-4-2-.48 and DCSD Policy JBC(4) – PCMS requests a waiver of the 150 clock hour for courses earning high school credit. Instead course credit will be based on a combination of classroom performance and EOC Milestones performance, if any.

Waiver – High Achiever designation – PCMS requests a waiver of any DCSD guidelines for student qualification for the High Achiever program. PCMS will develop and implement a uniform procedure for student qualification for the High Achiever program.

Waiver – High School credit courses – PCMS requests a waiver of any DCSD guidelines for student qualification for high school credit courses taught in the middle school. PCMS will develop and implement a uniform procedure for qualification of students for high school credit courses.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVE, PLANS, AND WAIVERS

13. State Peachtree's Organizational Goals and Measures.

- a. All members of the PCMS Foundation Board and PTCC Executive Council will participate in governing board training.
 - All (100%) members of the Foundation Board and PTCC Executive Council will participate in an annual training on effective charter school governance and which also covers areas of identified needs for PCMS. This training is to be provided by a charter school board governance training provider approved by the Georgia Board of Education pursuant to Rule 160-4-9-.06 and its guidelines.
- b. The average score for Standard 7 – Positive Learning Environment on the Survey of Student Instructional Practices will increase by .05 each year.

PCMS recognizes students learn best when they are in a positive learning environment.

Currently, this is best measured by the results of the Survey of Student Instructional

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Practices. Using the .05 growth rate, PCMS school-wide scores for Standard 7 should be as follows:

Baseline 2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
2.26	2.31	2.36	2.41	2.46	2.51

- PCMS will institute Positive Behavioral Intervention Groups. These groups are composed of 6-8 students whose behavior causes disruptions in the learning environment. Each grade level will have a designated group of students selected according to the highest number of discipline referrals and teacher concerns. Students will participate in counselor-led group activities in which they must learn to engage with each other and communicate effectively to complete group objectives. During and after each activity, the participants and counselor will discuss the effective behaviors, ineffective behaviors, and ways to better meet the objectives. The participants and counselor will then discuss applying these problem-solving skills to their daily lives.
- All faculty will act as advisors through the Teachers as Advisors (TAA) program.
- Using monthly grade level professional learning communities, teachers will examine personal behaviors which impact the positive learning environment and based on this self-assessment develop strategies to create a more nurturing, caring learning environment for students.
- Using staff development courses, teachers will develop classroom strategies for disciplining students in a way that holds the student responsible for his or her behavior.
- Peer coaching will be provided to faculty members whose Standard 7 score is below 1.6.

c. Increase the teacher retention rate by 1% each year.

Baseline 2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
91%	92%	93%	94%	95%	96%

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- The Foundation will provide grants for professional learning development.
- PTCC Executive Council will provide funds for classroom needs not otherwise covered by DCSD.
- The Foundation will provide funds for teachers to participate in daylong common planning with other teachers in their subject and grade.
- The principal will have increased flexibility with respect to staff contractual hours including, but not limited to, evening conferences, Saturday academic remedial/enhancement programs for students, evening community programs, or other activities occurring outside of the normal school day.

d. Increase the survey score in the school climate domain of the CCRPI by 2 points per year.

Baseline 2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
82.989	no data available	85	87	89	91	93

- All certified staff will participate in staff development on the school-wide discipline plan. Teachers will be assessed on their effective use of the plan through the standard evaluation procedures of the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System.
- All certified staff will participate in staff development to assess the school-wide discipline plan and make recommendations to the School Climate Action Team.

e. Decrease the percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students serving five or more days in In-School-Suspension while not increasing the Out-of-School Suspension rate.

PCMS is targeting this group because it allows us to capture three distinct subgroups – African-American, Hispanic, and ELL. As indicated by the CCRPI, these three subgroups represent students with the highest need at PCMS.

Baseline 2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
76		66	61	56	51	46

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- Establish schoolwide standard operating procedures for addressing discipline incidents according to DCSD Code of Conduct.
- Establish mentoring program for students with repeated discipline referrals. The program will focus on helping students self-discover their positive characteristics and developing strategies for dealing with conflicts whether with peers or adults.
- Professional development for all adults in the building targeted toward de-escalation strategies to deal with discipline issues.

14. What specific actions will PCMS take to achieve its organizational performance objectives?

Goal 13.a. All members of the Foundation Board and PTCC Executive Council will participate in an annual training on effective charter school governance. An effectively trained Foundation Board and Executive Council will be better prepared to fulfill their duties and responsibilities under the charter.

Goals 13.b. and d. Training on effective discipline and the impact of expectations and words on students will enable teachers to provide a more positive classroom environment for students. This training focuses on teaching faculty members to self-assess in order to improve the classroom environment.

Goal 13.c. Working collaboratively with others who teach the same grade and subject enables teachers to hear instructional strategies and facilitates critical thinking with regard to instruction in ways which they would not likely implement on their own. The Foundation Board's provision of funds to allow teachers to collaboratively plan (based on grade and content) for the next school year for an entire day provides the opportunity for teachers to more effectively plan for their students. If teachers feel better prepared and have a larger variety of instructional strategies, they will feel more confident in their jobs and be more likely to stay teaching at PCMS. In setting this goal, however, PCMS understand that it has no control over a teacher's departure due to retirement, move, or DCSD policy changes or salary reduction.

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Goal 13.d. Students whose behaviors have them repeatedly being assigned to ISS do not feel engaged in school. By assigning mentors to these students, the students have someone in the building with whom they can connect and brainstorm strategies to be used when dealing with difficulties. If teachers are more effectively trained in de-escalation techniques, they can employ strategies which will allow them to avoid situations resulting in student assignment to ISS.

15. Which of the specific actions in the organizational plan require a waiver of state law, rule, or guidelines.

PCMS seeks a broad flexibility waiver with respect to its organizational plans. If granted, PCMS would use the flexibility to, among others,

- a. hire those highly-qualified (as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) staff members who are best suited to support the vision and mission of the Charter and who also possess strong pedagogical skills and content knowledge, and
- b. provide flexibility with respect to staff contractual hours in order to provide additional support to students outside of the normal school day.

Implementation of the policies and procedures PCMS requests requires waivers from state law and rules and county rules, including, but not limited to, the ones listed below:

<u>SBOE Rules</u>	<u>Georgia Statute</u>
160-5-1-.02 School Day and School Year for Students and Employees 160-4-5-.02 Language Assistance Program for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students	§ 20-2-159.4 Policies and guidelines for awarding units of high school credit based on demonstrated proficiency § 20-2-290 Organization of schools, employment of school administrative managers

Waiver - School Council - Peachtree requests an exemption to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-86 which governs school councils. Since its charter began in 2001, Peachtree has successfully functioned with the Foundation Board and PTCC Executive Council which more than meet the minimum composition requirements of the Code section. Peachtree requests that it continue to work under the auspices of the PTCC Executive Council and Foundation Board, the by-laws of which are attached as Appendix C.

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Waiver – Staff Contractual Hours – Peachtree requests a waiver from any DCSD policies with respect to staff contractual hours in order to address staffing needs during activities occurring outside of the normal school day.

Waiver – Priority Reassignment – Peachtree requests a waiver permitting the principal to fill any staff vacancies without regard to any DCSD priority reassignments.

IV. GOVERNANCE

16. Describe how an autonomous governing board will make decisions for the school.

- a. The Foundation Board is currently composed of nine voting members, and the Principal and chair of the PTCC Executive Council who are non-voting ex-officio members. Each member is appointed by the Foundation Board to serve a term of two years or until such member's successor has been appointed. Any vacancy occurring in the Foundation Board may be filled by the affirmative unanimous vote of the remaining Board members even though the remaining Board members may constitute less than a quorum of the Board. When filling vacancies on the Foundation Board, selection of new Foundation Board members will be based on identifying individuals whose areas of expertise are needed for the effective functioning of the Board and the mission of PCMS. These areas may include, but are not limited to, finance and accounting; legal and human resource services; fundraising and grant writing; marketing; community partnerships; and academic programming.

A brief description of the current members of the Foundation Board follows. A copy of each members resume is contained in Appendix B.

Chair - Fran Fuller holds a B.B.A. in Finance from Emory University and worked in Group Underwriting, Product Marketing, and Operational Training for the insurance industry for 15 years.

Treasurer - Alex Knight holds a B.S. in Business Administration with a concentration in accounting and a Master of Accountancy from the University of Tennessee. He is a CPA, Certified Financial Planner and a partner in Habif, Arogeti & Wynne, LLP.

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Recording Secretary - Ellen Etheridge holds a B.A. from The College of William and Mary and an M.B.A. from Georgia State University. She worked in various finance, communications, and marketing roles for a major telecommunications company for 11 years.

Kristin Eith leads the Foundation's Annual Fund. She attended the University of Georgia and Medical College of Georgia where she received her nursing degree. She is currently a NICU nurse at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

Lucia Urtusastegui holds a B.A. in Marketing from St. John's University and an M.B.A. in International Business from Nyenrode University. She is the Founder and Principal of both GLC International and El Espanol, translation, interpretation and consultancy firms.

Katie Moussouri holds a B.S. in Psychology from Washington University in St. Louis. She currently works as a teacher at Chamblee Methodist Kindergarten.

Nihat Guven holds an M.B.A from University of Georgia and a B.S. in Electronics Engineering from Bogazici University in Istanbul, Turkey. He is currently the Director of Strategic Alliances for Qualys, an international provider of information security and compliance cloud solutions.

Peggy Bussert holds a B.A. and M.Ed. from The College of William and Mary, and a J.D. from the University of Toledo College of Law. She currently teaches 8th grade and Accelerated Math and brings over 20 years of experience in both regular and special education. Before returning to teaching, Peggy practiced law in the areas of corporate and public finance, working as bond counsel on numerous school bond issues.

Mollie Terry holds a B.S. in Middle Grades Education from the University of Georgia. She currently teaches 6th grade Social Studies.

The Principal and Chair of the PTCC Executive Council are ex-officio members of the Foundation Board.

B. Scott Heptinstall, Principal holds a B.A. in Secondary Education and History from Auburn University and an M.Ed. from the State University of West Georgia. He is in his seventh

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year as Principal of Peachtree Charter Middle School and has 18 years of experience in education in the DeKalb County School District.

Julia LeDoyen, is currently the Chair of the PTCC Executive Council. She holds a B.A. from Wake Forest University and has previously worked as a mortgage banker.

- b. The PCMS Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization responsible for accepting tax-deductible donations and execution of the PCMS charter, and is governed by a chosen not elected board of directors. The Board of the Foundation is subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 *et seq.* (Open Meetings Act) and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 *et seq.* (Open Records Act). During the 2007-2008 school year, the Parent Teacher Association and the Governance Council for PCMS were merged into the Parent Teacher Charter Council. The PTCC now functions as an operating committee of the Foundation, the governing board of PCMS. The Foundation promotes long-term educational enhancements and manages the PTCC operating budget (the expenses of this budget are recommended by the PTCC Executive Council). Other duties include:
- Overseeing the preparation and publishing of the annual summary
 - Reviewing the principal's decisions on issues and the progress of the charter goals, including curriculum and personnel
 - Principal Evaluation—Principal's performance evaluation will be conducted by the DCSD Superintendent's designee. The Foundation & PTCC Executive Council will provide the principal with an advisory evaluation.
 - Reviewing and presenting budget for long term objectives
 - Managing long term budget of PCMS donated funds
 - Funding long term objectives consistent with Charter Objectives
 - Approving financial grant requests of teachers and staff
 - Reviewing and approving PTCC recommendations

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The PTCC Executive Council helps Peachtree achieve its mission statement by connecting the parents and teachers in decision-making through Action Teams. The current Action Teams include Finance, School Climate, Curriculum and Instruction, School Activities, Facilities and Equipment, and Family and Community Relations. Certified staff must actively participate on an Action Team. Non-certified staff, parents and community members are encouraged to join an Action Team. See Duties and Responsibilities flow chart in Appendix G

The PTCC exists to coordinate and facilitate the efforts of school and community in order to enhance and ensure student success. It is an operating committee of the Foundation. Its responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Gives all members of the Peachtree community a voice and stake in the school
- Communicates to all stakeholders upcoming events, changes in daily school routine, district information provided by DCSD through social media, website, phone and paper form
- Provides leadership, direction, and support to Actions Teams to facilitate the School Improvement Plan
- Gathers ideas and feedback from Action Teams, faculty and staff, families and community
- Reviews and makes recommendations to the principal on school-wide issues—such as accountability, annual budgetary issues, space issues, programs and curriculum ideas
- With the assistance of the principal, establishes annual goals and objectives for the coming year
- Evaluates Peachtree’s Charter: policies, procedures, operations, and propose amendments to the Foundation
- Ensures all daily decisions and actions are consistent with the Charter

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The Finance Action Team shall monitor the Parent Teacher Charter Council budget, and produce financial reports as required by the Foundation, Principal, Executive Council, DeKalb County Board of Education, and State of Georgia. This team will coordinate and review financial and staff requests from other Action Teams in order to make recommendations to the Executive Council or, in the case of grants and other special funding, make requests to the PCMS Foundation for consideration. A PCMS Foundation Board member shall serve on this action team as a liaison.

All Executive Council members have the following responsibilities

- Promote communication and teamwork within the Executive Council, Foundation, school, and community.
 - Communicate the ideas and concerns of Action Teams to the Executive Council.
 - Champion Peachtree's vision, mission, and charter.
 - Make recommendations to the principal concerning issues that affect a significant portion of the Peachtree community.
- c. The Governance matrix is attached as Appendix H.

PCMS seeks increased input into the selection of the principal as well as the types and allocation of personnel positions specific to our school. With financial information provided to PCMS by DCSD, the governing board and Principal will negotiate site based changes and curriculum adjustments with the District. The Governing Board in partnership with the administration will review PCMS's school improvement plan to ensure charter innovations are implemented and charter goals met. PCMS will support enforcement of District discipline policies and requirements and review supplemental additions

- d. With respect to any principal opening, the non-profit governing board will develop the charter requirement characteristics for a principal. The Board will prepare principal job description for input into the DCSD electronic employment system. DCSD will process and

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review all candidates and select a minimum of three highly qualified candidates to present to the Board for interviews. The Board will interview these candidates and select two finalists to present to the DCSD Superintendent. In collaboration with the DCSD Superintendent, the Board will select the final candidate. Outside of the principal selection, the non-profit governing board will not have any say in the hiring or termination of school personnel. This responsibility will remain with the principal. The principal will adhere to all DCSD human resources guidelines and board policy regarding employment.

PCMS is seeking limited financial autonomy from DCSD. It seeks the ability to move funds between designated accounts as needs arise and without DCSD Board approval. Please see Section VI, Question 24 for further clarification.

- e. When filling vacancies on the Foundation Board, selection of new Foundation Board members will be based on identifying individuals whose areas of expertise are needed for the effective functioning of the Board and the mission of PCMS. These areas may include, but are not limited to, finance and accounting; legal and human resource services; fundraising and grant writing; marketing; community partnerships; and academic programming. The Board will seek qualified individuals from the community by announcing vacancies and needs via school electronic newsletter in various languages in order to reach all members of the PCMS community.
- f. Any Board member of the Foundation may be removed from office with cause with the affirmative vote of a majority of the Board members entitled to vote at any meeting of the Board called for that purpose. Examples of cause for removal include, but are not limited to, misuse of funds, failure to disclose any conflict of interest, and failure to fulfill their obligations as a Foundation member.
- g. All members of the PCMS Foundation Board and PTCC Executive Council will participate in an annual training on effective charter school governance and which also covers areas of identified needs for PCMS. This training is to be provided by a charter school board

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- governance training provider approved by the Georgia Board of Education pursuant to Rule 160-4-9-.06 and its guidelines.
- h. Annual training for Foundation Board and Executive Council members will take place no later than September 30 of each school year. The process of recruiting and retaining high quality Foundation Board members is described in paragraphs 16(a) and (f) above. In addition to general board training, the board will seek specific training with respect to test and CCRPI interpretation, educational trends, involving diverse communities, and financial sustainability.
 - i. There are currently no conflicts of interest except as disclosed in Appendix I. Two Foundation Board members are on the faculty of PCMS and one serves on another nonprofit board. Executed Conflict of Interest forms from each Foundation Board member are attached as Appendix I. The Conflict of Interest forms shall be executed by each Foundation Board member no later than September 1 of each school year.
 - j. Please see paragraph 16(b) for this information.
 - k. The Principal's performance evaluation will be conducted by the DCSD Superintendent's designee in accordance with the Leader Keys Effectiveness System. The Foundation & PTCC Executive Council will provide the principal with an advisory evaluation based on feedback from the Parent Survey conducted in the spring of each school year and student achievement as measured by the EOG Milestones.
 - l. The Foundation Board will closely and continuously monitor various operational, financial, and academic actions and policies. The Foundation Board will require administration, PTCC and PTCC Action Teams have clear organizational objectives which adhere to the Charter. In May the Foundation and PTCC will hold joint transition board meetings to ensure new board members are aware of responsibilities, establish an annual budget for upcoming school year, review progress of current academic programs and identify future needs.

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- m. The Foundation Board is composed of a minimum of five members at least two of whom are on the PCMS faculty. The remaining members of the Foundation Board will be pulled from parents and community members. Through the PTCC, parents and community members may participate in Action Teams and provide input into the governance through those channels in addition to attending Foundation Board and PTCC Executive Council meetings all of which are open to anyone who chooses to attend.
- n. At the beginning of each school year, PCMS parents sign a Charter agreement, attached as Appendix J, in which they agree to abide by the terms of the Charter and to volunteer 10 hours during the school year. These volunteer hours can be met through a combination of the following: attending PCMS meetings, participating on PTCC Action Teams, assisting teachers or staff, donating items, donating money to volunteering time with the Foundation. As part of the Charter, all faculty are required to participate on an Action Team of their choosing.

PCMS recognizes there are many stakeholders interested in the success of our students and school: parents, students, teachers, staff, the community, DeKalb County School Board and School District, and the State School Board. PCMS continues to depend on stakeholder involvement in its ongoing self-analysis, improvement actions, and successes.

Previous years have had volunteer hours recorded as high as 12,000, overall averaging 10,000 hours yearly for the past 6 years of the current charter.

Parental involvement is a key organizational component to our charter and is essential to student success. In addition to improved student achievement, other positive results include reduced absenteeism, improved behavior, and restored confidence among parents in the education system. A home environment that encourages learning is

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more important to student achievement than income, education level or cultural background.

- o. PCMS communicates to student families through weekly e-blasts during the school year and twice monthly during the summer months. PCMS will maintain a current school website with a Google translation option. In addition, PCMS maintains an electronic marquee purchased by the Foundation which provides up-to-date news and information regarding school activities. PCMS faculty communicate with parents through phone contact, emails, and progress reports. PCMS will utilize an interpreter, speak and listen devices for all parent meetings. All written communication to PCMS stakeholders will be translated into the predominant languages of the PCMS households.

17. Grievances

The Parent Grievance Policy should be followed for all parent complaints. Parent complaints will be addressed in a timely and consistent fashion. Disagreements should be solved whenever possible among the people most closely involved while preserving positive relationships. Parents are discouraged from becoming involved in disputes that do not directly impact them. Parents and staff are expected to be sensitive to the privacy of others. Therefore, any discussions of concerns relating to a particular situation shall be limited to the parties directly involved.

When parents have complaints or disagreements with any parties at Peachtree Charter Middle School that directly impact them, they should observe the following guidelines:

Student and Parent

1. If the complaint involves an academic or athletic situation, parents should seek to resolve the issue with the classroom teacher/teacher assistant or coach/assistant coach as is appropriate.
2. If a resolution with the classroom faculty or coach is not possible, the parent should seek to resolve the issue with the Assistant Principal or the Principal.

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3. If the complaint is related to the Assistant Principal or the Principal, the parent should seek to resolve the issue with the Assistant Principal or the Principal.
4. If the complaint is with a school-wide policy or procedure that is not directly related to the Charter, the parent should seek to resolve the issue with the Assistant Principal or the Principal in accordance with DCSD policy.
5. If the complaint is with a school-wide policy or procedure that is dictated by the Charter, the parent should contact the Chair of the Foundation or its designee.
6. If resolution is not possible with any of the parties above, parents may submit complaints in writing or sign up to address the Foundation or its designee at a regularly scheduled meeting. The parent will determine if they choose to present their concern in writing only or wish to address the Foundation. The Foundation will respond to grievances, in writing, no later than 10 business days after the complaint is presented to the Foundation.
7. Parents should remember the following when considering making a complaint to the Foundation:
 - i. The Foundation will not address complaints unless steps 1 through 4 (as relevant) have been adhered to and resolution with the specified individuals has been attempted in good faith.
 - ii. The Foundation will not address a complaint based on hearsay or made on behalf of another parent or family or staff member.
 - iii. The Foundation will not address complaints that are made anonymously.
 - iv. The Foundation will not address specific complaints about the performance of individual school employees.
8. Students with complaints, who wish to handle their grievances themselves, will be encouraged to meet first with their teacher. If the complaint cannot be resolved, the student shall then meet with grade administrator. If the resolution is not reached, the student shall meet with the building principal. If resolution is still not reached, the

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student shall contact the Governing Board. Due to the age of PCMS students, the expectation is that parents will be their child's advocate.

Nothing shall go before the Governing Board which would be in violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as amended, 1996, SBOE Rule 505-6-.01 – The Code of Ethics for Educators, or any other state or federal law or policy. In these situations, the grievance would follow the normal DCSD grievance policy. This Grievance Policy is not designed to supercede or supplant federal law and parent rights under The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and FERPA.

Faculty and Staff

PCMS teachers will be expected to follow the DeKalb County School District's procedures and policies for filing grievances. PCMS teachers have the same rights and responsibilities under these policies as teachers at traditional DeKalb County Schools.

All employee grievances will be resolved in accordance with DeKalb County School District Board Policy GAE(2) (certified employees) and GAE(3) (non-certified employees).

Internal Conflict

The Board will exercise due diligence in investigating internal conflicts with final decision being made by a majority vote of the Board not involved in the conflict. In the event the conflict involves all members of the Board, the Board will select an individual mutually agreeable to all parties to resolve the conflict.

Charter Petitioner and District

In the event, PCMS and DCSD have a disagreement with respect to the Charter which can not be resolved internally and in good faith, either party may request a low level mediation. If a conflict cannot be resolved, after appropriate due process, between the local school district and the conversion petitioner, the GDOE State Office for Policy, Charter Schools, District Flexibility, and Governmental Affairs may be contacted by either party.

18. An official copy of the certificate of incorporation for the required Georgia nonprofit corporation from the Georgia Secretary of State is attached as Appendix D.

19. The resume for each governing board member is attached as Appendix B.

- a. The relevant experience of each governing board member is included in the response to question 16 above.

20. Peachtree's Foundation bylaws are attached as Appendix C and the PCMS calendar indicating dates and times of Foundation and PTCC meetings is attached as Appendix L.

21. Conflict of interest forms are attached as Appendix I.

V. CONTRACTS WITH EDUCATIONAL SERVICE PROVIDERS OR OTHER CHARTER PARTNERS

22. Does Peachtree intend to contract, or has Peachtree contracted, with an education service provider (ESP) or other charter partner to provide management or consulting services?

No

23. List any proposed business arrangements or partnerships with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, or nonprofit organizations (excluding those relationships discussed in previous section).

PCMS Partners in Education include: Bank of North Georgia, Chik-fil-A, Domino's, Huntington Learning Center, Jersey Mike's-Dunwoody, Kaplan Orthodontics, Kroger-Orchard Park, Northside Hospital, Pearle Vision-Perimeter, Plantation South of Dunwoody, Rita's Italian Ice, Rotary of Dunwoody, Shane's Rib Shack and Subway-Dunwoody Hall. PCMS has benefitted by these partnerships through direct donation of money and supplies as well as being provided with the opportunity to host fundraising events at many of these locations.

PCMS also currently partners with the Navy's SeaPerch program, Georgia Institute of Technology Research Institute, and HATponics Sustainable Agriculture.

A detailed discussion of the partnership arrangements can be found in the Executive Summary and The Case (1)(c)(iii) and (iv). All contact information for above partners is listed in Appendix E. When partnerships are finalized, any conflicts of interest within each partnership will be disclosed to the DCSD Charter office.

VI. FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES, PLANS, AND WAIVERS

24. State Peachtree's Financial Goals and Measures.

- a. By the end of the charter term, PCMS envisions increased financial autonomy while maintaining a strong financial partnership with DCSD. Over the term of the charter contract, PCMS may seek increased financial autonomy in areas such as transportation, school nutrition, facilities, and instructional resources; however, PCMS does not intend to seek financial autonomy with respect to human resources. All FTE funds and PCMS Foundation funds will be zero balanced by the end of each school year, with the exception that the Foundation may maintain a general reserve and a reserve designated for long term projects.
- b. PCMS will operate in a financially sustainable manner through the use of DCSD funds for all five years of the proposed charter term.

As a conversion charter, PCMS will continue to receive funding in accordance with state and county guidelines based on the timeline established by DCSD. PCMS shall remain a DCSD school and will retain all the same insurance terms and conditions and amounts of coverage and protections afforded to every other middle school in DCSD.

- c. Describe the school's plans for fiscal management and specify how the school will manage budgets and expenditures.

The Principal will be responsible for the management of the budget and expenditures.

- d. GaDOE spreadsheets

See Appendix P.

- e. Chief Financial Officer

As a conversion charter school, PCMS will continue to use the services of the DCSD Chief Financial Officer; however, as PCMS negotiates increased financial autonomy, the need for an independent financial advisor may arise.

- f. Who is responsible for the financial management of the charter?

The Principal and PCMS bookkeeper are responsible for the financial management of the charter. As employees of DCSD, these individuals should be covered under any DCSD policies.

25. What specific actions will the school take to achieve the financial performance objectives?

The Foundation holds an annual fund campaign allowing the school to retain 100% of the funds raised thereby not diverting any proceeds to a middle man (i.e., gift wrap sales).

PCMS will comply with the federal monitoring requirements for schools receiving federal funds.

In order to ensure sound fiscal practices, the following steps will be taken:

- a. An annual operating budget for the PTCC will be recommended by the Finance Action Team of the PTCC, in support of the School Improvement Plan and submitted to the PTCC Executive Council for review and approval. After which this budget will be presented to the Foundation for review and final implementation approval.
- b. The PTCC Executive Council will assign the proposed expenditures to the appropriate Action Team with the approval of the Principal.
- c. The Foundation will be responsible for the actual disbursement of any funds received through grants and the Annual Fund and CV Classic.

With respect to funds provided through DCSD, the principal and bookkeeper will comply with the financial management requirements of DCSD.

PCMS is not implementing any financial innovations.

26. Fundraising or Other Sources of Income

The annual fund campaign is led by the PCMS Foundation. While the push is during registration at the beginning of each school year, additional requests are made just before the end of the calendar year and before April 15. Donations can be made all year and may also be made online.

The IRS tax-exempt letter for the PCMS Foundation is attached as Appendix D.

27. Which of the specific actions in the financial plan require a waiver of state law, rule, or guidelines?

There are no waivers from the state guidelines; however, PCMS requests full autonomy over curriculum resources, including textbooks. Because we are not initially seeking full financial autonomy (see Question 24 above), the CFO of DCSD will oversee all funds received by PCMS

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from DCSD. As a conversion charter school, PCMS will continue to use the services of the DCSD Chief Financial Officer; however, as PCMS negotiates increased financial autonomy, the need for an independent financial advisor may arise. For purposes of the funds of the Foundation, the Foundation's treasurer will operate as chief financial officer. The Foundation's treasurer will meet the educational and training requirements for a chief financial officer under the state charter guidelines. Because PCMS will not have full financial autonomy and functions under the CFO for the DCSD, the \$1 million bond requirement is not necessary.

VII. STUDENT ADMISSIONS

28. How will students be admitted to the charter school?

- a. Describe the PCMS targeted attendance zone.

All current PCMS students and all future students who reside within the PCMS attendance zone and/or who, together with their families agree to abide by the terms of this Charter, are automatically eligible to enroll and are guaranteed a space. The PCMS attendance zone is determined by the DCSD. Currently, the attendance zone is bounded by I-285 to the south, Buford Highway to the east, and the Fulton and Gwinnett county lines to the north and west.

- b. Please state the following enrollment priorities that apply.

Priority will be given to students in the PCMS attendance zone. If space is available, PCMS will accept students based upon the following priority:

1. Sibling of student currently enrolled
2. Child of a full-time faculty member, professional, or other employee of PCMS
3. Child of a parent or guardian on the PCMS Foundation
4. In the event there are additional spaces available, a blind lottery process conducted by DCSD will be used to select students for enrollment.

- c. Describe the rules and procedures that will govern admission and registration.

Any student residing within the PCMS attendance zone will automatically be admitted to PCMS after providing proof of residency as required by DCSD. All other admissions will be

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in compliance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-2066 and section (b) above. PCMS follows the DCSD admission, registration, and withdrawal process. It will not utilize unique forms for this.

- d. Describe procedures for situations if student applications for admissions exceed available space.

If the number of applications exceeds the projected number of open seats for PCMS, an automated random lottery will be conducted by DCSD for all students who submitted a timely application. Applications for such lottery can be found on the DCSD website under “School Choice Guidelines and Procedures”. Students will be placed on a waiting list in the order selected by such lottery. Such list is currently held by the School Choice Office of DCSD. This DCSD conducted and controlled random lottery ensures the admissions process adheres to legal requirements and is equitable and non-discriminatory. Parents of students selected or wait-listed are notified via mail by DCSD. Parents of selected students are also contacted via phone by the PCMS counseling office.

- e. How will Peachtree reach students representative of the racial and economic diversity in DCSD?

PCMS will utilize the DCSD school choice website, open enrollment flyers, school marquee to advertise open enrollment dates, and school choice tours to reach students representative of the racial and socio-economic diversity of the school system. The student population residing in the PCMS attendance zone is highly diverse as indicated below; however, this diversity is different from that of DCSD and is one of the reasons the charter is necessary. When over one-fourth of the student population comes from homes where the primary language is not English, the needs of the school change. PCMS needs the flexibility to address the needs created by this diversity of cultures and languages.

Demographics	<u>DCSD</u> (from 2014 CRCT Report)	<u>Peachtree Charter Middle School</u> (2015-16 enrollment)
Asian/Pacific Islander	4%	8%

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Black	74.2%	15%
Hispanic	9.2%	28%
American Indian/Alaskan	0.1%	.01%
White	9.8%	46%
Multiracial	2.7%	3%

- f. How does the school plan to recruit students and maintain/increase enrollment? The enrollment application is in Appendix K.

Currently PCMS is over enrollment at all grades, and enrollment is projected to continue to increase over the next five years. Students selected in such lottery are waitlisted. In the event the school population declined and the current waitlist has been exhausted and open seats still exist, PCMS would advertise an additional lottery via local media, school website, and school marquee. An application process with strict deadlines and requirements would be utilized to establish a qualified pool of applicants. PCMS would ask DCSD to conduct an additional automated random lottery from this new pool of applicants to fill any open seats.

- g. Peachtree’s proposed annual calendar and a draft of the school’s schedule is attached as Appendix L.

VIII. FACILITIES

29. Describe the school facility that PCMS proposes to use.

- a. PCMS occupies an existing facility owned and maintained by the DCSD. The current building includes 34 classrooms designated for ELA, math, and social studies; 11 science classrooms, 3 classrooms designated for fine arts/world languages; 3 vocational labs; 2 instrumental music rooms; 1 choral music room; 2 physical education rooms; 3 remedial rooms (SPED); 1 alternative programs; 3 computer labs; 3 self-contained rooms (SPED); 12

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portable classrooms; 1 cafetorium; 1 media center; 1 kitchen; 1 gym; administrative and counseling offices; and 3 conference rooms.

- b. Will the facility require renovations?

No, except as described in paragraph 29(d) below.

- c. What is the location of the facility?

4664 N. Peachtree Road, Dunwoody, GA 30338

- d. How does this facility meet the required space need for PCMS?

Currently, PCMS is over capacity and uses 12 learning cottages to handle the additional enrollment. Over the course of the five year charter term, student enrollment is expected to increase by over 500 students. If this estimate remains accurate, there would be a need for an additional 20 classrooms either through additional building or learning cottages. In addition, some teachers do not have assigned rooms and “float”. PCMS has historically been at or over capacity during the existing charter term. Additional learning cottages may be required due to increase in student enrollment, more effective student ratios, and other needs of the student population. In addition, PCMS would need an auxillary gym and locker space and increased serving lines in the cafeteria. These would be secured and funded by DCSD via the current process of approval.

- e. School Site Selection Form

NA

30. Does PCMS have an MOU for the facility pending charter and facility approval?

The need for an MOU between PCMS and DCSD is currently under review by DCSD. PCMS will work in collaboration with DCSD in creating this document.

31. Does PCMS have a Certificate of Occupancy for the facility?

A copy of the Certificate of Occupancy is attached as Appendix M.

32. Does PCMS have an emergency safety plan pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-1185?

- a. Provide the school’s emergency/safety plan.

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The PCMS Safe School Plan is attached as Appendix N.

- b. Describe how all local and state policies related to health and safety will be met.

PCMS will comply with all local and state health and safety policies, including, but not limited to, health inspections, fire safety inspections, and fire, weather-related, and intrusion drills.

IX. STUDENT DISCIPLINE

33. PCMS will adopt the DCSD Student Code of Conduct as the school's discipline policy.

- a. All PCMS students will be trained on the Code of Student Conduct – Student Rights and Responsibilities and Character Development Handbook (included as Appendix N) annually within the first five days of school. Each year students receive a copy of the DCSD Code of Conduct and sign an acknowledgement of receipt form as required by DCSD. All PCMS students will be required to take and pass the DCSD discipline test to demonstrate understanding of the rules and regulations of the school district. Students enrolled throughout the year will follow this same procedure. The DCSD Code of Conduct describes the rules and procedures for all disciplinary actions, not just the most serious forms of discipline such as out of school suspension and expulsion. In addition, PCMS will have its own Parent/Student Handbook (included as Appendix Q) which will be in accordance with the DSCD Code of Conduct and will contain site specific information.
- b. To support the mission of the school, PCMS will participate in the character development program defined in the Code of Conduct. Annual bullying, harassment and hazing training will be conducted with both students and staff within the first ten days of school and subsequently throughout the school year. PCMS will also provide annual training to parents on the topics of bullying, harassment and hazing.
- c. PCMS will at all times meet the federal due process requirements for students with disabilities, or students believed to have a disability, who are suspended or removed for

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disciplinary reasons. As defined in the Code of Conduct, students with disabilities will be disciplined in compliance with federal due process procedures in the case of suspension or expulsion of more than 10 days (manifestation determination), “special circumstances” related to weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury, and due process, or other matters covered under federal law.

- d. PCMS will establish a dress standard. The current dress standard is attached as Appendix O.

X. OTHER INFORMATION

34. Transportation

PCMS will begin the new charter term by contracting with DCSD to seamlessly continue the transportation services currently provided to students residing in the PCMS attendance zone. The PCMS Board may investigate other transportation that meet or exceed safety requirements and are more cost-effective or responsive to local requirements. Consistent with current DCSD policy, transportation will not be provided for students outside the primary attendance zone.

35. Food Services

PCMS will continue to participate in the School Nutrition Program provided by DCSD, to include participation in the National School Lunch Program as administered by DCSD and use the food services provided by DCSD; however, PCMS reserves the right to discuss changes to the food service program if the Board deems it appropriate.

36. Legal Representation

As a conversion charter school, PCMS will remain a DCSD school and will retain all the same legal rights and representations afforded to every other school in DCSD. PCMS is remaining under the legal umbrella of DCSD.

37. Insurance

Information on insurance coverage and amounts are required in the following areas: a. General Liability, b. Errors of Omissions, c. Property/Lease Insurance, d. Auto Liability, e. Worker’s

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Compensation, f. Theft. As a DeKalb County Conversion Charter School, PCMS will retain all the same insurance, terms and conditions and amounts of coverage and protections with respect to these enumerated items afforded to every other school in DCSD. The Foundation Board maintains Directors and Officers insurance with respect to its activities.

38. Amendments to this Charter

If at any time during the term of this charter a revision or addition is desired, the charter may be amended. Amendments to this charter can only be initiated by the PCMS Governing Board and must follow the amendment procedure detailed below:

- Proposed amendments must be in compliance with the existing Charter Schools Rule and law for the State of Georgia.
- Proposed charter amendments may be submitted at any time during the charter term, except that the charter may not be amended during the last six months of the charter term prior to renewal.
- A formal amendment to the charter must be written and presented at a Charter Council meeting for vote. The amendment vote must achieve quorum with a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the charter council to meet preliminary approval.
- After approval by the Charter Council, the amendment will be added to the Charter document. The amendment, and any other revisions, will be highlighted and accompanied by a cover letter explaining the amendment and its purpose (hereinafter referred to as —amended charter document!).
- The amended Charter document shall then be presented to the DeKalb County Board of Education for its approval.
- Upon approval by the DeKalb Board of Education, the amended Charter document will be presented to the Georgia Board of Education in accordance with State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9-.04 CHARTER SCHOOLS.

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- Upon approval by the Georgia Board of Education, the amendment will be considered approved and effective immediately for the duration of the term of the charter.

XI. ADDENDUM QUESTIONS

1. Personnel – Describe a plan for organization and management of faculty, instructional staff, and other employees of PCMS. Please include a copy of the faculty handbook in the Appendix.

At this time, complete control of personnel by the PCMS Board is not considered to be crucial to the success of implementing the charter innovations or to increased student achievement. As a result, faculty and instructional staff and other employees will remain employees of DCSD. The organizational structure of the school, including administrative and counseling assignments, are set forth in the Faculty Handbook in Appendix Q. It is aligned with DCSD policy and defines PCMS specific organization, administration, local school policies and procedures, teacher evaluation and supervision, and curriculum and instruction, among others.

2. Staff Qualifications, Recruitment, and Hiring Practices, Procedures, and Compensation

a. Describe the PCMS employment policies and procedures, including the proposed staff qualifications, employee recruitment procedures, hiring practices, and compensation.

PCMS will hire and retain only highly-qualified (as defined by ESEA) faculty members.

PCMS will follow DCSD recruitment and hiring practices, procedures, and compensation.

b. Job descriptions

PCMS will utilize all DCSD job descriptions with respect to all staff. PCMS is not employing any individual who will not be covered under one of the DCSD descriptions.

c. Describe whether PCMS will use the state salary schedule, and if another schedule will be used, provide that schedule.

PCMS will utilize the DCSD salary schedule attached as Appendix R.

d. Indicate if substitute teachers will be utilized, for which positions, and at what rate of pay.

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PCMS will continue to utilize the DCSD Subfinder system to identify qualified substitute teachers for all certified staff absences. Substitutes will be paid at the rate established by DCSD.

e. A salary schedule for all certified employees should be in an Appendix.

The salary schedule for certified employees is attached as Appendix R.

f. How will the charter adhere to current DCSD policies, procedures and standards in all areas regarding the status of district employees to include treatment, qualifications/credentials, placement, compensation, and evaluation?

Because PCMS teachers, staff and administrators will remain DCSD employees, PCMS will adhere to the state salary schedule and DCSD policies, procedures, and standards in all areas regarding the status of district employees to include treatment, qualifications/credentials, placement, compensation, and evaluations, with the exceptions described. Exceptions related to the selection and evaluation of the Principal are outlined in Appendix H. See responses to Question 1.

2. Certification and Highly-Qualified Teachers.

Certification by the GaPSC will be required. All PCMS teachers will be highly-qualified.

3. Background Checks

All PCMS employees will be subject to fingerprinting and background checks by the DCSD Public Safety Office upon hiring, promotion, and five year anniversary.

4. Employee Evaluation

As DCSD employees, teachers will be evaluated using TKES (Teacher Keys Effectiveness System), counselors will be evaluated using GLEI, administrators will be evaluated using LKES (Leader Keys Effectiveness System), paras and non-certified staff will be evaluated using the DCSD developed non-administrative evaluation instrument..

5. State Health Benefit Plan Participation

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As DCSD employees, all PCMS staff will be eligible to participate in the State Health Benefit Plan pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-880 and O.C.G.A. 20-2-910 and will be offered coverage through the DCSD Benefits Office.

ATTACHMENT A – N/A – Start-up charter schools only.

Renewal Charter School Addendum – These questions were addressed in the Executive Summary at the beginning of the petition.

ATTACHMENT B

Conversion Charter Goals:

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

A. The Beating the Odds analysis is a cross-sectional, fixed effects regression model that uses the following factors from the CCRPI school-level dataset, GaDOE student record file, and GaDOE CPI¹ data.

a. Student-based Factors:

- % African American
- % Hispanic
- % White
- % Other
- % Free/Reduced Lunch
- % Students with Disabilities
- % English Learners
- % Gifted

b. School-based Factors:

- School Size (FTE)
- Student/Teacher Ratio
- School Configuration/CCRPI Score Type (i.e. Elementary, Middle, High)
- Locale Type (i.e. City, Town, Rural)
- District Performance (fixed effect)

The renewal decision at the end of the charter term will be based in part on whether the school “beat the odds” in all years of the charter term except for the year in which renewal is sought.

Goal 2: The Charter School will demonstrate proficiency and/or improvement on the CCRPI.

A. Measure 1: The Charter School’s CCRPI score shall be equal to or better than both the State and the local district in 2015-16, and better than both the State and local district in 2016-17 and all remaining years of their charter contract.

¹ Certified/Classified Personnel Information

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- B. Measure 2: If the school's baseline CCRPI score (2014-15) is lower than either or both the local district and the State, the School shall have until the end of the 2015-16 school year to close the gap between the Charter School and whichever score is higher, the local district or the State.
- C. Measure 3: In 2016-17 and all remaining years of the charter contract, the Charter School's CCRPI score shall be better than both the State and the local district.

The renewal decision at the end of the charter term will be based in part on whether the school's CCRPI score was equal to or better than both the State and local district in 2015-16, and better than both the State and local district in 2016-17 and in all but the last of the remaining years of their charter contract.

ASSURANCES FORM AND SIGNATURE SHEET

The law requires your school provide assurances that it will do certain things and comply with certain laws. This Assurance Form enumerates all of these requirements and, when you submit this signed Signature Sheet with this Assurance Form as part of your Start-up Charter School Application Package, you are providing the legal assurance that your charter school understands and will do these things. This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the school.

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter for Peachtree Charter Middle School located in DeKalb County is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that if awarded a charter the school:

1. Shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations;
2. Shall be subject to the control and management of the local board of the local school system in which the charter school is located, as provided in the charter and in a manner consistent with the Constitution;
3. Shall not discriminate against any student or employee on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, national origin, gender, disability or age;
4. Shall be subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of the physical health and safety of school students, employees, and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the prevention of unlawful conduct;
5. Shall be subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A § 20-2-1050 requiring a brief period of quiet reflection;
6. Shall ensure that the charter school and its governing board are subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq. and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq.;
7. Shall ensure that the charter school's governance board members may only receive compensation for their reasonable and actual expenses incurred in connection with performance of their duties;
8. Shall ensure that the charter school's governing board members receive initial training and annual training thereafter, provided by a SBOE-approved vendor;
9. Shall ensure that the charter school's governing board adopts and abides by a conflicts of interest policy;
10. Shall ensure that all teachers will be certified or highly qualified in compliance with No Child Left Behind;
11. Shall comply with O.C.G.A. §20-2-210(b)(1) and implement an evaluation system as adopted and defined by the State Board of Education for elementary and secondary school teachers of record, assistant principals, and principals;

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12. Shall comply with the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-14-30 through § 20-14-41 and federal accountability requirements, and participate in statewide assessments;
13. Shall adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including the IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as applicable;
14. Shall provide state and federally mandated services for English Language Learners, as applicable;
15. Shall provide for supplemental educational services as required by federal law and pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03, and for remediation in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01;
16. Shall notify the state of any intent to contract with a for-profit entity for education management services;
17. Shall notify the state of any changes in for-profit entity contracted with for management services;
18. Shall be subject to the requirement that it shall not charge tuition or fees to its students except as may be authorized by local boards by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-133;
19. Shall comply with federal due process procedures regarding student discipline and dismissal;
20. Shall be subject to all laws relating to unlawful conduct in or near a public school;
21. Shall have a written grievance procedure to resolve student, parent, and teacher complaints;
22. Shall have a written procedure for resolving conflicts between the charter school and the local board of education;
23. Shall comply with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20 -2-211.1 relating to fingerprinting and criminal background checks;
24. Shall remit payments to TRS on behalf of employees and shall employ teachers in accordance with TRS;
25. Shall ensure that if transportation is provided for its students, the school shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws;
26. Shall ensure that if the charter school participates in federal school meals programs, then it shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws;
27. Shall prepare a safety plan in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185 and submit and obtain approval from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency;
28. Shall comply with the state facility requirements regarding site codes, facility codes, the submission of architectural plans for any new facility that the school may build or occupy during the charter term and all other facility requirements as established by the Department;
29. Shall be subject to all reporting requirements of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160, subsection (e) of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320, and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-740;
30. Shall be subject to an annual financial audit conducted by the state auditor or, if specified in the charter, by an independent certified public accountant licensed in this state;
31. Shall designate a Chief Financial Officer that meets all requirements as established by the Charter Schools Rule and Guidelines;
32. Shall secure adequate insurance coverage prior to opening and shall maintain such coverage throughout the charter term in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia;
33. Shall acknowledge that all criteria used to calculate QBE funding may not be waived; and

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34. Shall follow any and all other federal, state, and local laws and regulations that pertain to the applicant or the operation of the charter school.

This Charter School Application, Assurance Form, and attached Exhibits were approved by the DeKalb Board of Education on the _____ day of _____, 201_.

Authorized Representative, Charter School

Date

Chair, Local Board of Education

Date

If a Charter is granted, Petitioners assure that the proposed charter school's 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.

Authorized Representative, Charter School

Date

Chair, Local Board of Education

Date