

Implementing Local School Governance & Maximizing Flexibility in Georgia Charter School Systems



**FLEXIBILITY
&
GOVERNANCE TRAINING
2022-2023**




BARROW COUNTY CHARTER SCHOOL SYSTEM

March 21, 2023
Dr. Lynn M. Plunkett
Charter System Foundation

AGENDA TOPICS

- **What is a Charter System?**
- **What is Effective Governance for Charter Systems?**
- **What is Broad Flexibility? What are examples of Broad Flexibility in Charter Systems?**



What is a Charter System?

What is Effective Governance for Charter Systems?

What Is A Charter System?

- **Created by the Charter System Act of 2007**
- **Contractual Agreement between Local Board of Education and State Board of Education**
- **State BOE agrees to:**
 - **Grant Broad Flexibility from most state laws and regulations**
 - **Include additional funding in state funding allotment (subject to appropriation by legislature)**
- **Local BOE agrees to implement:**
 - **Local School Governance and to provide annual training for School Governance Teams**
 - **Use of Flexibility to implement innovations**
 - **Increased Student Achievement**

What is **BROAD FLEXIBILITY** in a Charter System?

- **Broad Flexibility** allows Charter Systems to waive most of **OCGA Title 20**, and **State Board of Education Rules/Guidelines**
- **Broad Flexibility** is intended to be used in designing and implementing innovations that will advance student achievement and support the school improvement plan and district strategic plan.

What Laws Are NOT Included in Broad Flexibility?

- **All Federal Laws**
- **Federal, state, and local laws/rules/guidelines re:**
 - **Civil rights,**
 - **Insurance,**
 - **Protection of the physical health and safety of school students, staff and visitors**
 - **Conflicts of interest**
 - **Prevention of unlawful conduct in or near a public school**
 - **Reporting requirements**
 - **Accountability**
 - **EIP requirements**
 - **Check with the latest GaDOE Guidance**

WHAT IS SCHOOL LEVEL GOVERNANCE?

- **Maximize school level governance and the involvement of parents, teachers, and community members in such governance**
- **Grant decision-making authority in personnel decisions, financial decisions, curriculum and instruction, resource allocation, establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, and school operations**
- **per O.C.G.A. 20-2-2062 and 20-2-2063**



WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SUPERINTENDENT IN CHARTER SYSTEM GOVERNANCE?

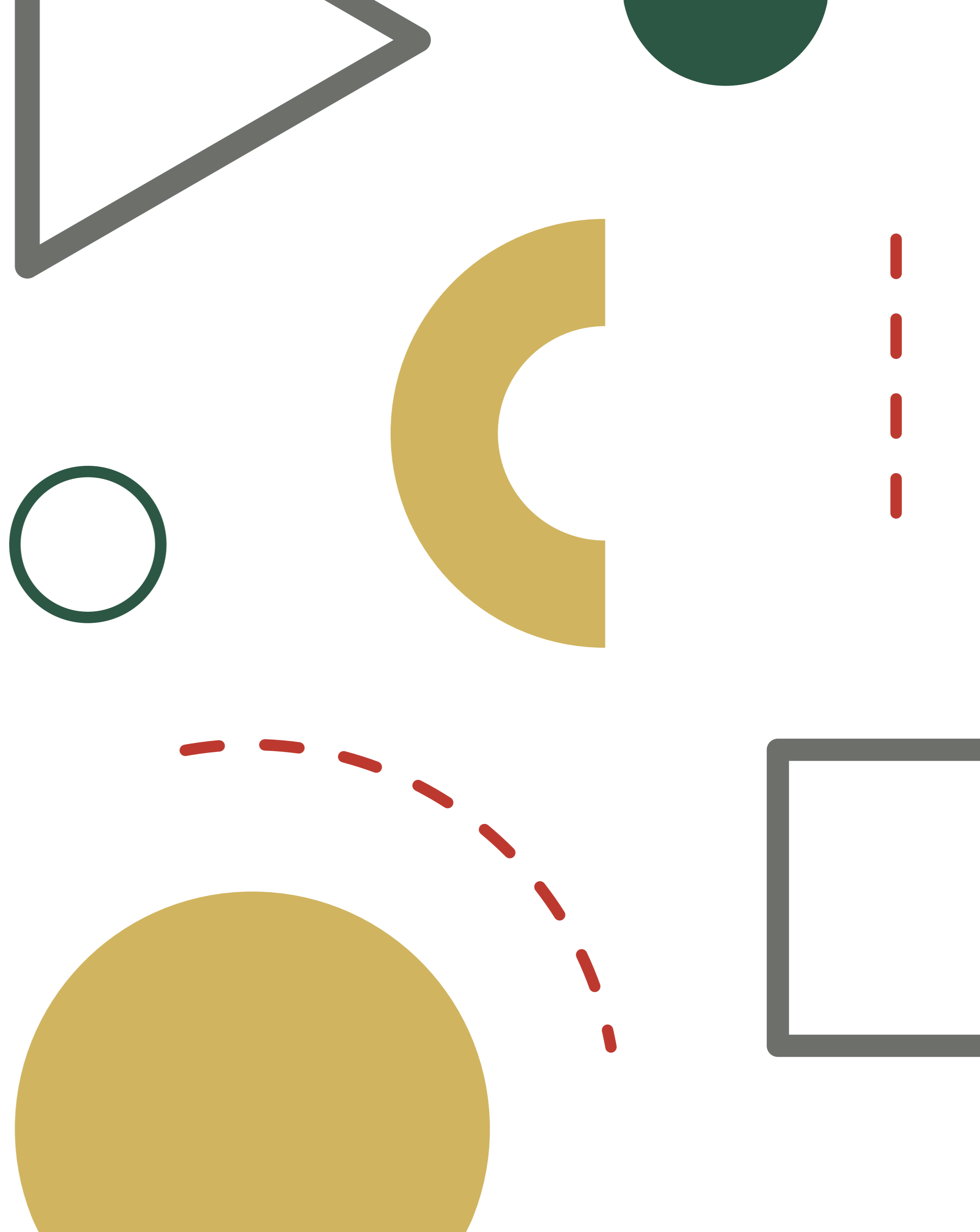
- Georgia law makes it clear that schools within gadoe.org a charter system remain under the control and management of the Local Board of Education

•
[See O.C.G.A. 20-2-2065(b)(2)]

- This means that, although the Superintendent and LBOE give consideration to the recommendations and input of LSGTs, the LBOE ultimately retains its constitutional authority.

How Can We Use Charter System Supplemental Funds?

- Charter System funding is included in the QBE allotment and can be carried over from year to year
- Districts have flexibility over how they use the charter system funding within these parameters: to implement innovations, support the school improvement and/or district strategic plan, training/support for School Governance Teams, school/district staff and leadership development in the work of effective charter systems.
- Best Practices
 - Align use of funding with school improvement planning and district strategic planning initiatives
 - Align use of funding with areas of student achievement need, supported by data
 - Involve SGTs in decisions about the use of funding
 - Review annually use of funding and adjust allocation, as needs change
 - Monitor the impact of funding on student achievement



General Governance Teams Responsibilities

- Adopt the school improvement plan and updates
- Review progress on the school improvement plan
- Participate in the identification of instructional programs, operational processes, resources and innovations to improve student achievement
- Provide input into the annual school budget that supports the school improvement plan
- Participate in hiring of the Principal in the case of a vacancy



Code of Ethics/Conduct

- **Respect chain of command**
- **Do not provide direction to staff or influence staffing decisions unless officially designated to be part of the selection process**
- **Represent *all* students**
- **Be informed about matters before the Governance Team**
 - **Focus on facts related to student achievement**
- **Communicate community issues to the principal**
- **Participate in training and attend meetings**
- **Work collaboratively with others**
- **Speak with one voice**
- **Individual LSGT members have no authority**
- **Mandatory child abuse reporter**

13 Charter System Governance Structure

LSGT

- Can make recommendations to superintendent
- Participates in decision-making in areas that impact school improvement
- Advocates and supports the work of the teachers and principal
- Provides varied perspectives during decision-making

LBOE

- Determines district budget
- Approves personnel

Superintendent

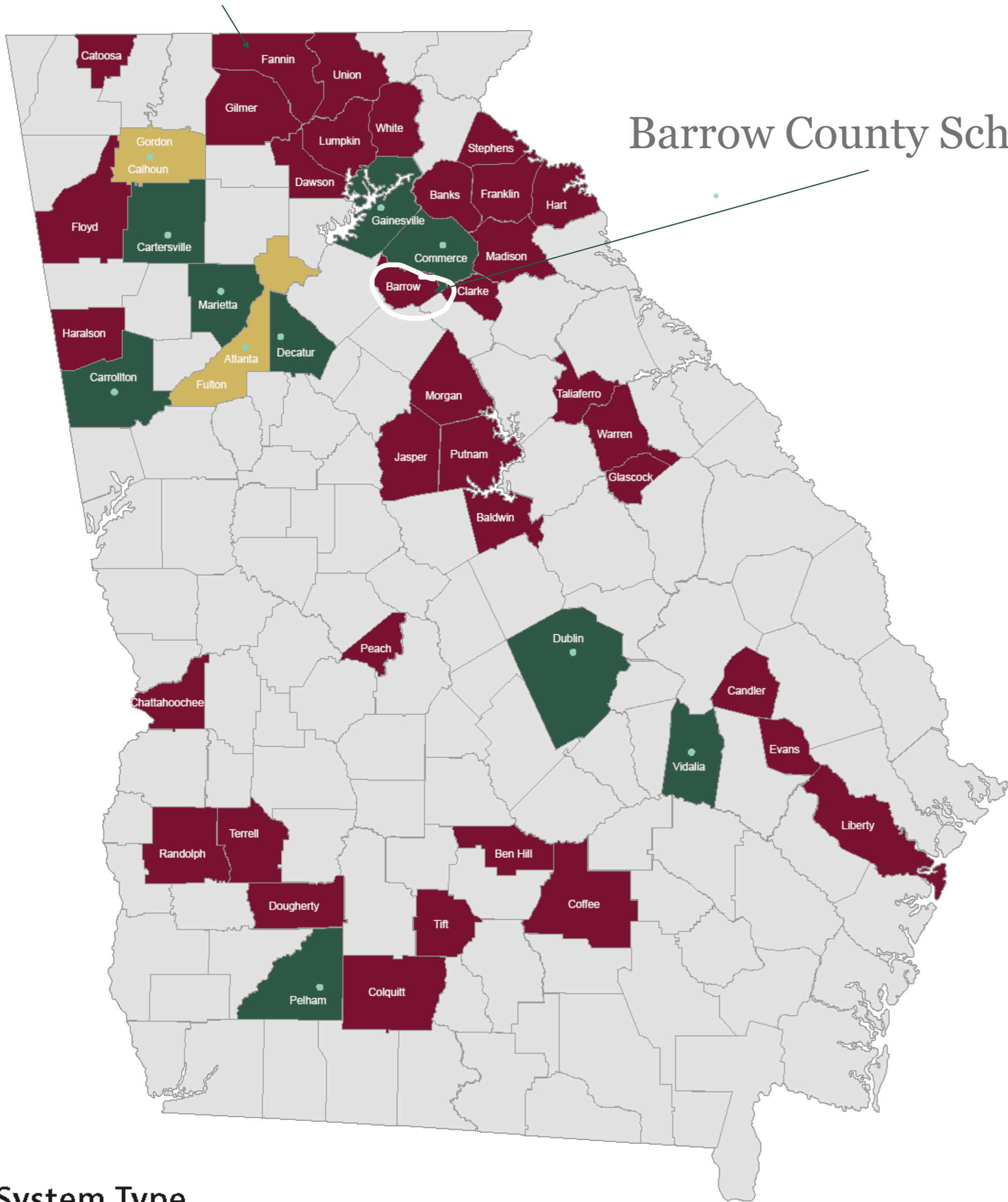
- Develops district budget
- Selects and directs district personnel

Principal

- Develops school budget
- Recommends, manages and evaluates school personnel

School staff

- Instructs and supports students



Barrow County Schools Charter Systems in Georgia

- Atlanta Public Schools
- Baldwin County Schools
- Banks County Schools
- Barrow County
- Ben Hill County
- Calhoun City Schools
- Candler County Schools
- Carrollton City Schools
- Cartersville City Schools
- Catoosa County Schools
- Chattahoochee County Schools
- Clarke County Schools
- Coffee County Schools
- Colquitt County Schools
- Commerce City Schools
- Dawson County Schools
- Decatur City Schools
- Dougherty County Schools
- Dublin City Schools
- Evans County Schools
- Fannin County Schools
- Floyd County Schools
- Franklin County Schools
- Fulton County Schools
- Gainesville City Schools
- Gilmer County Schools
- Glascock County Schools
- Gordon County Schools
- Haralson County Schools
- Hart County Schools
- Jasper County Schools
- Liberty County Schools
- Lumpkin County Schools
- Madison County Schools
- Marietta City Schools
- Morgan County Schools
- Peach County Schools
- Pelham City Schools
- Putnam County Schools
- Randolph County Schools
- Stephens County Schools
- Taliaferro County Schools
- Terrell County Schools
- Tift County Schools
- Union County Schools
- Warren County Schools
- White County Schools
- Vidalia City Schools

System Type

- County
- City
- City and County

Barrow County School System Charter System Process

Became a Charter System on July 1, 2011 with 5-year contract to expire on June 30, 2016

Conducted a collaborative contract renewal process during the 2015-2016 school year

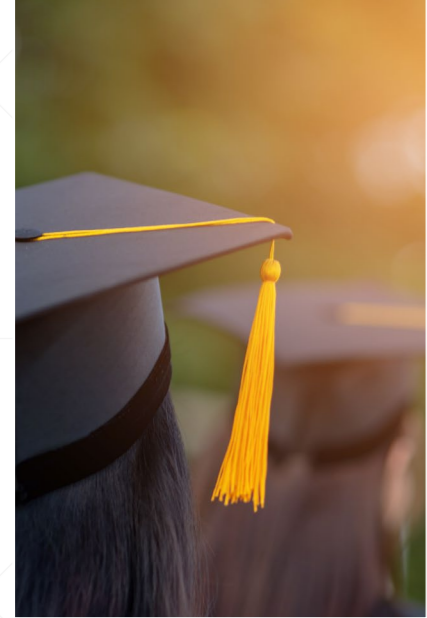
Awarded a **10-year contract** renewal July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2026

Involved SGTs, District Leadership, Community Partners, BOE, Stakeholder Groups

2011-2016 Contract Term- Examined the effectiveness of local school governance, use of flexibility to implement innovative practices, and use of supplemental funding to improve student achievement

2016-2026 Contract Term- Proposed innovative practices, strategies to address barriers to SGT effectiveness, use of supplemental funding to improve student achievement

Three Charter Areas of Focus



Increasing the
Graduation Rate



Preparing Students
for College/Career
Success



Manage System
Growth

Academics & Student Success

- 📍 **Create a robust, developmentally appropriate, simplified curriculum that is accessible to teachers, students, parents, and families.**

Elevating the Teaching Profession

- 📍 **Attract, employ, develop and retain a highly effective diverse staff who provide exceptional educational opportunities for all students.**

Communication & Culture

- 📍 **Establish BCSS as a destination for work and school to draw families, staff, and industry to Barrow County for our excellent school system.**

Finances & Infrastructure

- 📍 **Strategically manage system growth and ensure equitable distribution of resources by maintaining and improving processes for operational excellence, customer service, and shared accountability.**

Communication & Culture

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Finances & Infrastructure

Strategically manage system growth and ensure equitable distribution of resources by maintaining and improving processes for operational excellence, customer service, and shared accountability.

Academics & Student Success

Create a robust, developmentally appropriate, simplified curriculum that is accessible to teachers, students, parents, and families.

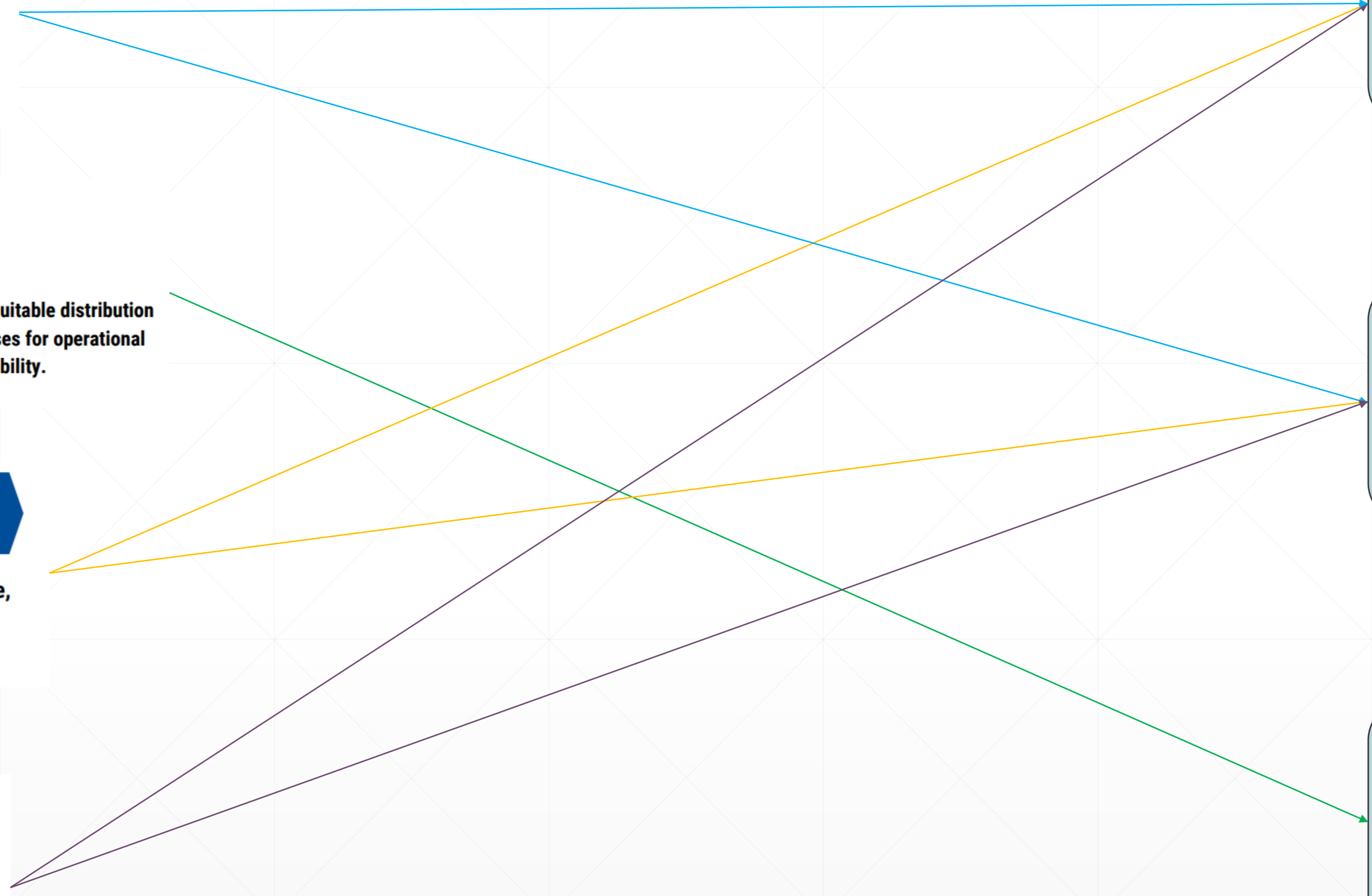
Elevating the Teaching Profession

Attract, employ, develop and retain a highly effective diverse staff who provide exceptional educational opportunities for all students.

Charter Area 1:
Increasing Graduation Rate

Charter Area 2:
Improving College/Career Readiness of Graduates

Charter Area 3:
Managing Growth



BCSS Charter Scope of Work

SGT should remain focused and consider matters that:

Align with the school improvement plan

Align with budget and resource allocation priorities

Focus on and positively affect the overall student population, the staff, and the school

Consider matters that promote a positive school climate, strong communication, and involvement of all stakeholders

Take time to recognize and celebrate success

Provide input on principal selection to the superintendent, as needed

Barrow Specific Charter Structure

Cluster Governance Team

Convenes 1x per Semester as needed

Governs decisions larger than a single school or a decision a single school wishes to make with the ability to impact other schools

District Governance Team

Meets on a called basis

Determines if a particular item rising through the SGT process should go before the Board of Education

Meeting Requirements

SGT Meets 1x per month during school year. November/December may be combined

Notice of meeting must be posted on website with an agenda 48 hours prior to meeting date. Location must be provided, and meeting must be accessible to public. Called meetings with 24-hour notice are permissible

Requests to appear before SGT: Individuals must complete a form and submit 5 school days prior to meeting. Citizens have 3 minutes to make verbal presentation.

Meetings conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order

Minutes must be taken and posted online or made available online within 10 days of meeting completion

Meeting must have a quorum in order to occur (i.e. a bare majority of members)

BCSS Use of Charter Funds

Charter funds are used for staffing to work with students and teachers in areas such as mathematics, language and cultural diversity, digital media, learning supports, behavior supports, & technology. Funds are also used to support innovative practices and strategies for program flexibility (ArtsNow).



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- Board of Education
- Superintendent
- Executive Cabinet
- Departments
- Staff Directory

- Alumni
- Charter System Overview ←
- Data Dashboards
- Federal Programs
- Strategic Plans
- Title IX

- Bids
- Careers
- News
- Teacher of the Year

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- ⊕ Q: What is a Charter System?
- ⊕ Q: What is local school governance in a charter system?
- ⊕ Q: What are the Barrow County School System's top 3 challenges we hope to address during our 10 year charter system contract (7-1-16 to 6-30-26)?
- ⊖ **Additional Charter System Documents:**
 - Charter System Contract 2016-2026
 - Charter System By-laws
 - BCSS Public Participation in School Governance Team Meetings (Spanish)
 - BCSS Request to Appear Before School Governance Team (Spanish)
- ⊕ How can I get involved?

NEW LEE SCHOOL
March 8, 2023

GRAD TR SPOTLIG BRUTZ
March 6, 2023

[View All](#)



Waived

How Can We Use Charter System Flexibility to Improve Student Achievement?

Retention Requirements Example

- **Challenge:** Ga law and SBOE rule base promotion/retention in specific grades on one test score. School's Data Teams and RTI teams have determined that that many of the students just need additional time and resources to achieve academic success in some, but not all, academic areas. School wants to base P/R on totality of info and not one test score and serve students in the areas in which they are not achieving mastery.
- **SBOE Rule:**160-4-2.11
- **Solution:** Students receive instruction based on their needs and not their grade level designation. Instruction continues until students demonstrate content mastery.







Waivers

**Flexibility and Waivers
in Action in Georgia
Charter School Systems**



URGENT CARE CLINIC



-  **THE CHALLENGE:** Continued focus on student well-being
-  **INNOVATION:** Partner with AdventHealth, Gordon to open a health clinic on middle/high campus. The partnership will serve CCS students, staff and families and local community. Provides a learning environment for the healthcare students at the Calhoun College & Career Academy.
-  **LSGT Involvement:** Decision making process re: allocating time and use of grant funding.
-  **FLEXIBILITY USED:** Optimized community partnerships to leverage funding of various grants/foundations. Flexible scheduling for students to support the clinic in healthcare pathway. The hospital uses flexibility waiving specific requirements traditionally in place to allow students to work on-site.

RESULTS:

Opened 6/15/20. Fully operational. Since opening, the AdventHealth Urgent Care at Calhoun City Schools has completed over 800 free sport physicals to student athletes, 300 biometric screenings to Calhoun City Schools employees, completed 3,664 patient visits, and performed 1,466 COVID tests.

Baldwin County Schools Montessori

The Challenge: No educational option is right for every child, every year, so Baldwin County wanted to be able to provide whatever style of education children need.

- Why Montessori?
 - REQUEST from parents for another option
 - CHOICE for parents
 - CHILD CENTERED program


Innovation: Montessori is student-driven education. Began as an ELC partnership with Georgia College (fee based).

- Montessori Academy w/Georgia College - Birth to 5 Early Learning Center
- 2 Pre-K Classes Lakeview Primary - 2 classes; K-1 & 1-2
- Midway Hills Primary - 3 classes K, & 2 classes of 1-2
- Lakeview Academy- 2 classes; 3rd, 4th
- Only one of 5 public Montessori school districts in Georgia offering Montessori.
- The ONLY school system in GA to offer a HEAD START Montessori Program



CALHOUN CITY SCHOOLS


Jacket Junction Mobile Learning Lab

 **Challenge:** Students were not ready for pre-K and lacked simple vocabulary and readiness skills.

 **Innovation:**

- Utilize student instructors from Calhoun's College and Career Academy Teaching as a Pathway and Early Childhood Pathway to provide individual / small group interaction with children 6 months to four years.
- Engages parents and children in the learning process.
- Travel to local housing authority properties and local daycare partner.



 **LSGT Involvement:**
The LSGT approved use of Charter System funds to support this initiative AND the initiative and curriculum delivery for ECE pathway.

MOVING FROM **CRAYONS** TO **CAREERS**



K-12 VERTICAL ALIGNMENT

STREAM INITIATIVE

A PARTNERSHIP FOR LEARNING

Carrollton City Schools takes full advantage of Buffalo Creek which flows the entire length of the campus. Innovation moves the classroom into the creek to make science, technology, reading, engineering, arts and math (STREAM) come to life for students. These real world, project-based learning experiences driven by the support of C.S. Britton, Inc. and Wildland Hydrology has united city government, engineers, business partners, the University of West Georgia and a partner school in Hunting Valley, OH in an endeavor to better understand natural channel design and the impacts of community development.



COLLABORATION WITH UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA



EXPERTS IN THE FIELD



 **CARROLLTON CITY SCHOOLS**



EXTERNSHIPS





Clarke County
School District
Better Together



CLARKE COUNTY

Barnett Shoals Elementary “Where Scholars Become Legends” Leader in Me at BSE!

Challenge(s):

- Results from 2020 school-based Climate Survey found a decrease in the number of students “feeling valuable” and “trying hard/focusing” from 2019. Found teachers lacked capacity to effectively teach prosocial skills and behaviors, and promote intrinsic motivation for all students.
- There was a need for a whole-school improvement model using teaching practices to promote social and emotional learning for students and focuses on teaching school-wide expectations.

Innovation: Adopt a school-wide approach through Franklin Covey’s Leader in Me.

LSGT Involvement: After several meetings with reps from Franklin Covey, the team voted to use grant funds to support this initiative. A sub-committee was established.

The Leader in Me(LiM) committee worked alongside school personnel to plan and implement the roll-out. Members were invited to attend the core training with staff.

Currently, the LiM committee is working to involve families to utilize LiM at home to bridge between home and school.

Committed to continue

Charter Mini Grants for Innovation and Creativity



Mrs. Nicole LeCave, Superintendent

www.dawsoncountyschools.org

nlecave@dawson.k12.ga.us

- **Challenge:** Dawson County Schools has a strong desire to expand CTAE and Fine Arts in its elementary schools and to increase innovations and opportunities for all students.
- **The Innovation:** Provide schools and teachers an opportunity to participate in a competitive grant process to earn funds for innovation and creativity.
- **School Governance Teams:** School Governance Teams evaluate and approve the charter mini-grants at the school level before they are submitted to the district.
- **Results:**
 - A large amount of the district's charter funds are put directly back into the hands of schools and teachers as a part of the grant process.
 - Increased innovations and opportunities for students such as:
 - Creation of The Little Tiger Theater Company
 - Ag Day
 - Engineering/robotic labs
 - Book Vending for literacy
 - Outside Tranquility Classroom
 - Virtual Reality Labs in Elementary
 - Video Broadcasting Labs
 - Student designed and ran Tiger Thread Store



Dublin City Schools Irish Gifted Academy



Challenge

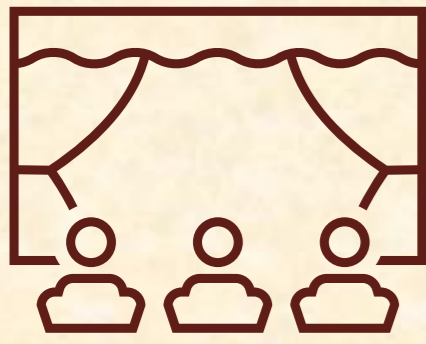
Strategic Goal of “High Achievement and Success for All Students,” DCS sought to provide better resources to a commonly underserved part of the student population: Gifted identified students.

Innovation

- P-8 in buildings of the former Dublin High School
- Technology-rich learning environment with project-based individual and cooperative learning integrated thematic curriculum akin to the Ron Clark Academy
- Family-like atmosphere, students divided into houses (think Harry Potter book series) Younger students receive positive mentor support from older students, and older students given leadership roles in and among their respective houses (each house consists of P-8 students)
- IGA is a program and not its own school
 - Students return to “base schools” for extracurricular and athletic activities such as Beta Club and football, fostering and inspiring community across DCS
- The ultimate goal for the IGA is to serve as a feeder program for DCS’ successful International Baccalaureate program

Innovation: Shift from a traditional pull-out model and instead transition to an all-day gifted program of choice.

Irish Gifted Academy: Education Reimagined (video)



Liberty County Expansion of the Fine Arts Opportunity

- **The Challenge:**
 - Students could benefit from options to the traditional Fine Arts courses offered in their high schools.
- **The Innovation:**
 - The district has implemented Modern Dance, Piano, Photography, and Gaming and Animation pathways. Audio-Visual Film Production was added this year.
 - Courses are offered at 3 different HSs.
 - Buses run throughout the day at the end of every block. Students attend daily.
- **LSGT involvement:**
 - Involved when implemented. Approval of course materials and supplies using school-based charter funds.
 - **Flexibility Used:**
 - seat time, certification, curriculum and scheduling
- **Results:** Teachers worked part time and now are full time due to increase of student interest.
 - Hinesville Area Arts Council awarded a \$5,000 Gifted Internship and mentor to a student to cast, direct, produce, and present "A Christmas Carol" in December.
 - The Arts Council committed to another \$5000 grant for a student to do something similar this year.
 - The student received a full credit for the internship.
 - **Contact:** Kellie Ziegler kzeigler@liberty.k12.ga.us

Lumpkin County Schools Adulthood Day

- o **The Challenge:** How do we ensure all our students graduate from high school with the necessary tools and knowledge to live on their own? We provide them with a first-class education and prepare them for post-secondary options, but how do we prepare them for skills like changing a tire, basic car maintenance, cooking skills, general first aid, clothing care, and taking care of home repairs?
- o **The Innovation:** For the past two years, Lumpkin County created a day dedicated to seniors that would meet the needs of this challenge. By partnering with the CTAE department and their contacts in the community, every senior rotated through five sessions throughout a full school day to learn hands-on skills necessary for success in the real world.
- o **LSGT:** LSGT was involved in the proposal, approval of charter funds for this innovation. Members volunteered their time on Adulthood Day



Georgia College and Career Academy within a Charter System

Is an Innovative Feature listed in the contract, is usually considered to be a program (not a school), and does not receive its own state accountability reports or scores

Has state mandated accountability measures (graduation rate, Work-Based Learning, Dual Enrollment, technical college certificates, etc.) that are evaluated during certification process

Has a Governing Board that acts as the SGT

Governing Board can be combined with High School SGT or remain as a separate SGT that works closely with the HS SGT

Mission: To promote workforce development in the community/region

Goal: To prepare students to be college and career ready and able to enter the local/regional workforce

- High Quality, High Demand Technical Skills and Employability Skills
- Dual Enrollment with Technical College partner (or other post-secondary partners)
- Work-Based Learning
- Project-Based Learning

Barrow County School System Sims Academy Early College



Challenge: Need to create an innovative and collaborative dual enrollment partnership with Lanier Technical College.

Innovation: Lanier Technical College (LTC) - Barrow Campus, and the BCSS Sims Academy are co-located on a shared Workforce Development Campus. This provides Dual Enrollment Results in four key areas:

- Core Academics

- Career-Technical Education

- Industry & Higher Education Partnerships

- Educational Enrichment

[Link to Video](#)

Barrow County School System Sims Academy Early College



Core Academics:

Lanier Technical College offers core academic courses in Sims Academy Building.

Classes follow the Barrow bell schedule and calendar.

Tutoring at Sims Academy ensures student success and protects student GPAs.

Students may also enroll in upper-level college courses on Campus or online.

Barrow County School System Sims Academy Early College



Career-Technical Education

High school students may enroll in career-technical programs as cohorts to earn TCCs. Including:

Welding and Joining Technology: Basic Shielded Metal Arc Welder, Gas Metal Arc Welder*

Automotive Technology: Auto Electrical Technician, Auto Engine Performance*

Early Childhood Care and Education: Child Development Specialist and ECCE Basics*

Culinary Arts: Prep Cook Certificate

Nurse Aide: Nurse Aide

*Option B Graduation eligible



Barrow County School System Sims Academy Early College



Industry & Higher Education Partnerships

Provide equipment, supplies, classroom support, and work experience to cohort members: Kubota, Caterpillar, Akins Ford, Piedmont College (Athens Campus), NE Georgia Health Systems

Piedmont College-Athens, offers Early Childhood Care & Education students opportunity to transfer with an AA Science degree directly into Elementary Education BA program.

Students may participate in WBL to extend career prep beyond earning Technical Certificates of Credit.

Educational Enrichment

All Sims Academy Early College Dual Enrollment students have access to:

College visits, Industry tours, Guest presenters, Student Success Presentation prior to semester start, Optional seminars for success throughout the semester (Study Skills, Debt Free Degree, Mock Interviews)

CONTACT: Lee Bane; lee.bane@barrow.k12.ga.us



Charter System Foundation

[Click on this link to view all 7 Training Modules](#)

- **LSGT Governance Training Video Modules**
- **The Charter System Foundation partnered with the Carl Vinson Institute at UGA to produce 7 excellent video modules that can be used to provide or supplement training to new and current members of school governance teams, as well as for administrators.**
- **We hope you will find these useful in supplementing or developing a training program for your district.**

The Charter System Foundation is pleased to announce we are continuing our video project. Last school year, 9 charter districts participated. This school year, EEP Events will be contacting the rest of our 39 Charter Systems to schedule your visit.

The foundation contracted with *EEP Events*, CEO Jimmy Economos and Producer Matt Chastain to capture the essence of what a charter system is and highlighted innovations.

We encourage everyone to share these videos with your School Governance Teams.

14 Charter System Innovation Videos

www.vimeo.com/user/162696567/folder/7537682

Charter System Foundation - *The Charter System Story*

www.vimeo.com/user/162696567/folder/7537676

Charter Systems Signature videos can be found on our website under the ABOUT US tab:

[Click on this link](#)

You can receive 3 hours of training credit by attending today's workshop and discussing ideas stemming from today's session with your fellow Board members at the next work session or meeting.

Your Superintendent sends your names to Pam Tallmadge at Charter System Foundation

Charter System Foundation sends documentation to your superintendent.



**Training
Credit
for
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THANKS FOR
ALL YOU DO

FOR YOUR
STUDENTS!

PRESENTED BY CHARTER SYSTEM FOUNDATION
