

Peachtree Middle School

4664 North Peachtree Road
Dunwoody, Georgia 30338
<http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/~peachtreems/index.htm>

**A DeKalb County School
Teamwork Makes the Dream Work!**

Conversion Charter Renewal Petition for years

2010-2011

2011-2012

2012-2013

2013-2014

2014-2015

Table of Contents

Conversion Charter Petition Cover Pages	4
Part I Charter School Information	4
Part II Assurances and Signatures	5
Part III Executive Summary	6
Part IV LBOE Conversion Charter School Checklist	18
Mission Statement	24
Goals and Performance Objectives	24
Plan for Improvement	34
Academics	34
Flexible Staff and Flexible Curriculum	34
Instructional Strategies	35
Teacher-Student Ratio	40
Ensuring Adequate Yearly Progress	41
Parental Involvement	41
School Climate	42
Developing a Consistent System	42
Action Teams	42
Communication	42
Dress Standard	42
Academic Competition Teams	43
Attendance Policy	43
Enrollment Policy	45
Stakeholder Involvement	46
Parent Teacher Charter Council	46
Partners in Education	46
Original Charter Process	47
Renewal Process	47
Annual Evaluation	48
Control and Management	49
Grievance Resolution	49
Executive Council and Action Teams	51
Executive Council Structure	51
Roles and Responsibilities	51
Terms	52
Annual Meeting	52
Elections	52
Proceedings	52
Action Teams Structure	57
Roles and Responsibilities	58
Terms	58
Staff and Faculty	58
Financial Policies and Procedures	58
Duration of the Charter	60
Acknowledgements	61
State and County Waivers	63

Appendices

Proposed Annual Calendar/Sample Daily Schedule	A
Open Enrollment Application	B
Sample Parent Agreement and Sample Commitment Clause	C
Sample Dress Standard	D
Student Handbook	E
DCSS Code of Conduct	F
PTCC Operating Budget and PCMS Foundation Financial Statement	G
PTCC Executive Council Bylaws	H
PTCC Flowchart	I
PCMS Foundation Bylaws	J
School Safety Plan	K
Certificate of Occupancy	L
DCSS Salary Schedule	M
<u>MIDDLE SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY LITERACY ASSESSMENT</u>	N
Parent, Teacher, and Student Survey Results	O
2009-2010 Minutes of PCMS Foundation	P
References	Q

Conversion Charter Petition Cover Pages

Part I. Charter School Information

Check one: | New Petition X | Renewal Petition

Name of Petitioning Traditional Public School Peachtree Charter Middle School

Name of Proposed Charter School Peachtree Charter Middle School

Local School System DeKalb County Schools

School address 4664 North Peachtree Rd., Dunwoody, GA 30338

School contact person	<u>B. Scott Heptinstall</u>	<u>Principal</u>
	Name	Title

Address of school contact (if different from above) _____

Telephone number of school contact (678)-676-7749

Fax number of school contact (678)-676-7710

E-mail address of school contact Brian_S_Heptinstall@fc.dekalb.k12.ga.us

Part II. Assurances and Signatures

1. This petition has been agreed to, by secret ballot, by a majority of the faculty and instructional staff members at a meeting called with two weeks' advance notice during which time a complete petition draft was available for review.

Date of Vote August 4, 2009

Total Number of Faculty and Instructional Staff 81

Number Approving 81 Percent Approving 100%

Number Disapproving 0 Percent Disapproving 0%

Principal's Signature

Date

2. This petition has been agreed to, by secret ballot, by a majority of the parents or guardians of the students enrolled in the school who were present at a meeting called for the purpose of deciding whether to submit the petition. Two weeks' advance notice of the meeting was published during which time a complete petition draft was available for review.

Date of Meeting August 5, 2009

Total Number of Parents Attending Meeting 290

Number Approving 278 Percent Approving 96%

Number Disapproving 12 Percent Disapproving 4%

Principal's Signature

Date

This charter petition was approved by the DeKalb County Schools
Board of Education on _____.
Date

Superintendent

Date

Chair, Local Board of Education

Date

4. Petitioner(s) assure(s) that the proposed charter school programs, services, and activities will operate in accordance with the terms of the Charter and all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.

Authorized Representative, Charter School

Date

Part III. Executive Summary

Charter School Name Peachtree Charter Middle School

Grade Levels and Ages Served:

Peachtree Charter Middle School shall be a public, nonsectarian, nonreligious, nonprofit school organized and operated under the laws of the State of Georgia, which is not home-based and which shall be located in the facility listed herein. Peachtree Charter Middle School 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, Peachtree Charter Middle School shall not discriminate on any basis that would be illegal if used by a school system. Peachtree serves students ages 10-16 in grades 6 through 8.

Proposed Opening/Renewal Date July 1, 2010

Term of the Charter: This Charter shall commence on July 1, 2010 and shall expire at midnight, June 30, 2015, unless terminated pursuant to the terms hereof.

Enrollment Numbers: For each year of the proposed charter term, please indicate in the table below 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							478	404	363					1245
Yr 2							506	478	404					1388
Yr 3							551	481	454					1486
Yr 4							614	524	456					1594
Yr 5							595	554	472					1621

Attendance Zone: Students who reside within the current Peachtree Charter Middle School attendance zone and who, with their families, agree to abide by the terms of this Charter, are automatically eligible to enroll at Peachtree Charter Middle School. The Charter specifies that there will be an Agreement with the parents to ensure that all students are supported in achieving excellence.

NCLB

Is this school currently in, or has it ever been, in Needs Improvement status under NCLB?

☐ No ☒ Yes

If so, please state when. Schools currently in Needs Improvement must answer the additional questions found at the end of the application.

Peachtree Charter Middle School was placed on Needs Improvement during the 2007-2008 school year.

Mission Statement and Academic Program

The vision of Peachtree Charter Middle School is to be one of the top Middle Schools in the State of Georgia. To achieve this vision, we will focus on six key areas:

1. Increase math abilities.
2. Increase reading comprehension.
3. Increase the use of and availability of technology for students and teachers.
4. Enhance the school climate.
5. Continue to promote parent and community involvement.
6. Further develop a fiscally responsible and proactive Foundation

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

Academic Program: Peachtree Charter Middle School is committed to increasing student achievement, from those struggling in core academic content areas to those ready for even greater challenges than grade-level requirements. Our school population is arguably the most culturally, developmentally, and economically diverse in DeKalb County, giving our students the benefit of a rich tapestry of viewpoints and life experiences as well as challenging our teachers and staff to meet a wide range of needs and abilities. We celebrate our differences even as we all strive for a common goal: academic excellence.

In the past ten years as a Charter School, Peachtree has made major gains in student achievement, as measured by state- and federally-mandated benchmarks and standardized testing. We have also seen a significant increase in parent involvement and business community support by way of grants, Partners in Education agreements, and educational opportunities such as Junior Achievement.

Continued Charter status will allow Peachtree Middle School to build upon our successes. We will utilize flexible scheduling to meet the specific and changing academic needs of each student. We will update computer labs and mobile stations, and expand our use of technology in every classroom by teachers and students. We will enhance teacher training in areas such as gifted education, ELL, and use of Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions and RtI; and utilize non-certified specialists to provide enrichment in core academics. We will select and utilize curricula that specifically fit the needs of our students. In addition, we will continue to raise funds for programs and materials not provided or funded by the DeKalb County School System through grants, community giving, business sponsorships, and other means.

Organizational Innovation And Flexibility

Peachtree Charter Middle School's original innovations have, over time, become standards for our county school system. Where daily world language and physical education instruction were once unique to our school, they have since become available in all middle schools. 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 bring together more than a thousand 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 and Executive Council (parent/teacher governing board) will monitor, survey, research, and obtain funding for (as necessary) strategies for meeting our students' needs, even those that depart from traditional DeKalb County resources and programs. We will exercise our Charter flexibility to select programs and curricula that fit our students' needs. (The benchmark for all resources and strategies will be that they meet GPS and national guidelines.)

As a Charter School we have and will continue to:

- Utilize Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives to provide rigor and high quality instruction in an academically engaging setting.
- Improve upon the current curriculum and textbooks by selecting, utilizing, and purchasing (through grants and fundraising) materials that meet our students' needs.
- Provide measurable academic performance improvement criteria.
- Implement a school-wide discipline plan to enhance school climate.
- Utilize staff development to maximize student performance and achievement.
- Qualify for grants to fund technology, facilities and programs.
- Involve faculty and staff to serve as advisors to students, assisting them with issues such as careers, time management, service learning and citizenship.
- Nurture and rely upon parent volunteers to create, execute, and support quality of life and extracurricular enrichment for students.

During the next five years, our Charter School will also

- Utilize flexible scheduling to meet the needs of students.
 - Every 6th grade student and every 7th and 8th grade student who does not score 825 or higher on the CRCT will attend a Reading class each day; 7th & 8th grade students who score 825 or higher on the CRCT may opt to take a World Language.
 - Language Arts classes will focus primarily on writing skills, an area of weakness for all of our students, across all academic levels.
 - PE classes will include a technology rotation so that 100% of students learn to use essential software and technology applications that will benefit them in high school and beyond.
 - We will adapt to the changing needs of our students as requirements and needs evolve by adding coursework, enrichment, and outside-school-hours tutoring and enrichment classes.
- Work toward 100% of teachers gaining gifted endorsement so those skills and strategies benefit every student at PCMS, regardless of academic level.

Year	# Gifted Endorsed Teachers (out of 84 certified teachers on staff)
2010	28
2011	40
2012	50
2013	61
2014	72
2015	84

- Work toward 50% of teachers gaining ELL endorsement to better serve our increasing Hispanic population.

Year	# ELL Endorsed Teachers (out of 84 certified teachers on staff)
2010	9
2011	16
2012	22
2013	29
2014	35
2015	42

- Investigate and acquire curricula in reading, writing, and math to build academic achievements for students (funded by Foundation, grants, and community support).
- Develop more multicultural extracurricular programs that celebrate our diversity, including parent programs in the evening and weekends and Black History.
- Build stronger bridges with our Hispanic families who want to be involved, but are challenged by language and cultural differences, through better availability of translators (funded by grants and community volunteers) and proactive investigation and accommodation of successful parent volunteer programs at Hightower Elementary (a Title 1 School which consistently meets AYP and has strong parent participation).
- Add two more computer labs/classrooms, for a total of three, and add one Promethean white board per year (as of 2009, we have 14 installed in classrooms).

Parent Involvement

Parental involvement is integral to the success of our Charter. Research shows that parental involvement leads to improved achievement, reduced absenteeism, improved behavior, and restored confidence among parents in the education system. As noted in NEA Communications, 2002, a home environment that encourages learning is more important to student achievement than income, education level, or cultural background.

Our goal is that 100% of parents will volunteer 10 hours a year at Peachtree Charter Middle School. We recognize that parents' ability and interest in volunteering vary. Therefore, we offer a continuum of opportunities for parents to volunteer, both at school and at home.

The Evolution of Parental involvement during Charter Status:

2001-2002	Initial year of charter—data collected will be used as the baseline 111 families did not meet the goal of 10 charter hours per family out of 1067 students (this does not reflect the number of families, just total enrollment)
2002-2003	90% compliance (975 out of 1086 families completed their 10 hours of Parental Involvement)
2003-2004	69% compliance recorded, a lower number resulting from poor record-keeping. A new, interactive volunteer management system was instituted during this year.
2004-2005	From this point on, the data is recorded by total volunteer hours submitted through the interactive volunteer management system. Parents logged in 10,533 hours.

2005-2006	Parents signed hard-copy log books or used the software system to log volunteer opportunities. Teachers were able to post needs/requests to the website. The Council sent home letters to families in the spring notifying parents who have or have not completed the parental involvement.
2006-2007	The software system that was used to track volunteer activity had an increase in cost. It was not fiscally responsible to run that program on a yearly basis. We used the notebooks to record the parent's name and involvement. This is a more difficult method for tracking, and we began researching another software program.
2007-2008	We used the notebooks again in recording parent volunteer opportunities, and have found another online program to use to better track the involvement of the parents. During this school year, Peachtree also instituted the PCMS Foundation.
2008-2009	We instituted a new online program, and we logged in approximately 6500 hours.
Fall 2009	As of December 31, 2009, parents have logged 3,500 volunteer hours.
2010-2011	We will investigate a more user-friendly volunteer management program since parents have reported that the current system, PTO Manager, is not as accommodating as they prefer.

PCMS Foundation

Peachtree parents established the PCMS Foundation as a tax-deductible nonprofit organization charged with raising funds and providing fiduciary oversight of monies raised for programs, materials, and facilities supporting students and teachers. The Foundation has been aggressive in soliciting donations by parents, the community, and business supporters.

The PCMS Foundation is an additional entity controlled by a separate board of directors. The Foundation promotes long-term educational enhancements. The next page provides a description of the two entities and how the funds are used. The Foundation does manage the PTCC operating budget, but the expenses of this budget are decided by the PTCC Executive Council.

Examples of expenditures of the PCMS Foundation:

- Academic Teams (Academic Bowl, Science Olympiad, Math Team, Black History Bowl, Reading Bowl, Art Masters), includes teacher stipends and any team entry fees for the competitions
- class sets of novels
- teacher workshop/conference registration fees
- supplemental teaching materials by teacher request
- long-term, educational enhancements

The Foundation relies on the generosity of parents and community members throughout the school year. The Foundation raises money through straight donations and again through a drawing and food vendors on Student Showcase night.

(Booster clubs such as Band, Orchestra, Football, Cheerleading, and Academic Competition Teams etc. are NOT included in either the PTCC Operating Budget or the PCMS Foundation.)

For Renewal Petitions Only

How did the school perform in meeting AYP and the performance-based goals and measurable objectives of the charter?

a. Goal: To increase reading comprehension in grades six through eight.

As measured on the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT), two percent per year or six percent of the Level One students who have been enrolled at Peachtree for three years will be reading on or above grade level by the end of grade eight. In the 2006 – 2007 school year, 31 students entered sixth grade in Level One reading. Nineteen of these students remained at Peachtree all three years. Nine of these students have scored out of Level One in the latest test administration. The goal was 6%, we exceeded our goal with a 47% improvement.

b. Goal: To increase mathematical abilities in grades six through eight;

As measured on the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT), two percent per year or six percent of the Level One students who have been enrolled at Peachtree for three years will be performing math computations on or above grade level by the end of grade eight. In the 2006 – 2007 school year, 94 students entered Peachtree scoring Level One in math. Sixty-four of those students remained for all three years. Nineteen of the 64 have moved out of Level One after the latest set of test scores. We exceeded our goal of 6%, with approximately 27.7% of the Level One students performing math computations on or above grade level by the end of grade eight.

As a charter school, we have met and exceeded the goals that we have set in reading and mathematics. However, with respect to Adequate Yearly Progress, we did not address our subgroups. See detailed analysis in the Ensuring Adequate Yearly Progress section for more detail.

How did the school perform in achieving financial and organizational stability?

During the term of the charter, Peachtree's PTA was dissolved and merged into the Parent Teacher Charter Council. This was done without loss of parental support and participation in the traditional activities of the school. In addition, the school developed a Foundation, a non-profit organization with a separate board of directors, to oversee charitable donations. The Foundation undergoes an annual audit.

Summarize the proposed changes to the charter upon renewal.

Summary of changes for the Charter Renewal

All page numbers refer to the current charter

Page

Proposed Change for Renewal

6

Term of the Charter:

This Charter shall commence on July 1, 2010 and shall expire at midnight, June 30, 2015.

28-33

a. **Goal: To increase reading/ELA comprehension in grades six through eight.**

Performance Objectives:

- As measured on the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) and by the end of the term of the charter, 100% of the Peachtree students will meet or exceed the annual measurable objectives in the areas of reading and English Language Arts. In the 2006 – 2007 school year, 31 students entered sixth grade in Level One reading. Nineteen of these students remained at Peachtree all three years. Nine of these students have scored out of Level One in the latest test administration. The goal was 6%, we exceeded our goal with a 47% improvement.
- Peachtree will increase three percent of Level Two students who have been enrolled at Peachtree for three years to Level Three.

b. **Goal: To increase mathematical abilities in grades six through eight.**

Performance Objectives:

- As measured on the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT),) and by the end of the term of the charter, 100% of the Peachtree students will meet or exceed the annual measurable objectives in the area of mathematics. In the 2006 – 2007 school year, 94 students entered Peachtree scoring Level One in math. Sixty-four of those students remained for all three years. Nineteen of the 64 have moved out of Level One after the latest set of test scores. We exceeded our goal of 6%, with approximately 27.7% of the Level One students performing math computations on or above grade level by the end of grade eight.
- Peachtree will increase three percent of Level Two students who have been enrolled at Peachtree for three years to Level Three.

		2008-09 (Baseline)	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14 (NCLB)	2014-2015
CRCT Reading/ ELA	Does Not Meet	9%	7%	5%	4%	2%	0%	0%
	Meets	45%	42%	41%	39%	38%	37%	34%
	Exceeds	46%	51%	54%	57%	60%	63%	66%
	Meets + Exceeds	91%	93%	95%	96%	98%	100%	100%
	AMO (meets + exceeds)	73.3%	73.3%	80.0%	86.7%	93.3%	100%	100%

		2008-09 (Baseline)	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14 (NCLB)	2014-2015
CRCT Math	Does Not Meet	20%	16%	12%	8%	4%	0%	0%
	Meets	44%	45%	46%	47%	48%	49%	48%
	Exceeds	36%	39%	42%	45%	48%	51%	52%
	Meets + Exceeds	80%	84%	88%	92%	96%	100%	100%
	AMO (meets + exceeds)	59.5%	67.6%	75.7%	83.8%	91.9%	100%	100%

c. Goal: To improve students' and teachers' ability to use technology effectively and appropriately.

Performance Objectives:

- All of Peachtree's faculty will continue to participate in staff development sessions in the effective integration of technology into each respective content area along with modeling appropriate use of technology to students.
- Peachtree will add 2 more computer labs to the one in place as of 2009. Each lab will accommodate up to 30 students.
- Web pages will be utilized by 100% of the certified faculty
- Lesson plans will be posted in *MPEE Lesson Plans*.
- Peachtree students will be able to use word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software to produce grade-level appropriate print-based products.
- See Appendix N for a guideline of assessments to be used.

d. Goal: To close the racial achievement gap.

Performance Objectives:

PCMS will use the CRCT to calculate the achievement gap among our African-American and Hispanic students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. Our baseline data will be the 2008-2009 school year student achievement data.

- By 2009-2010, PCMS will decrease the achievement gap by 30% for African American students and by 10% for Hispanic students.
- By 2010-2011, PCMS will decrease the achievement gap by 35% African American Students and by 15% for Hispanic students.
- By 2011-2012, PCMS will decrease the achievement gap by 40% for African American students and by 20% for Hispanic students.
- By 2013-2014, PCMS will decrease the achievement gap by 45% for African American students and by 25% for Hispanic students.
- By 2014-2015, PCMS will decrease the achievement gap by 50% for African American students and by 30% for Hispanic students.

e. Goal: To develop a more positive school climate through school-wide discipline, character education, and by developing intercultural awareness to enhance the academic environment.

Performance Objectives:

- All of Peachtree's certified staff will participate in staff development sessions for the school-wide discipline plan. The teachers will be assessed on their effective use of the plan through the standard evaluation procedures of the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP), the Georgia Teacher Observation Instrument (GTOI), and the Georgia Teacher Duties and Responsibilities Instrument (GTDRI).
- Annually, all of Peachtree's certified staff will participate in staff development sessions to assess the school-wide discipline plan and make recommendations to the School Climate Action Team.
- Discipline referrals and in-school suspensions shall be reduced by 10% annually.
- Teachers will implement within the curriculum examples of activities and practices drawn from a variety of cultures in order to further develop intercultural awareness.
- Students and faculty will participate in an advisement period.

f. Goal: To continue to promote parental and community involvement.

Performance Objectives:

- By the end of each school year, all Peachtree families will earn a minimum of ten (10) parental involvement credits. Peachtree has adopted a new software package which will assist families in documenting volunteer opportunities. The school worked continuously during the year to get the families to log the opportunities via the web and are pleased to say over 6,500 hours were entered. We know more hours were donated and will work to get the families that do not have internet access the ability to submit hours as well while they are at the school but this was a great start with the new software package.
- Throughout each school year, Peachtree will involve a minimum of five (5) community organizations/business partners to enhance student life and global awareness. Peachtree is proud to state that at the close of the 2008-2009 school year the school has fourteen active partners, Bank of North Georgia, Bruster's, Cartridge World, Chick-fil-A, Domino's, Guthrie's, Huntington Learning Center, J. Alexander's, Jersey Mike's, Northside Hospital, Pearle Vision, Rita's Italian Ice, Shane's Rib Shack, Subway-Dunwoody Hall.
- Merchant Rebates programs allow individuals to contribute to the school through everyday means – such as the Box Top program, Publix, Georgia Natural Gas.
- PCMS will aggressively pursue grants and funding by Partners in Education, community foundations, and other civic groups.

	<p>Eliminate all references to WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment). These are actually standards, and this is the group that designed the ACCESS testing that the ELL students are administered each year. It would be more effective to substitute with training in the SIOP model (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol).</p> <p>Since this is our area of needs improvement, we will need to be more specific about how we will better meet the needs of the ELL (English Language Learners) students:</p> <p>In order to meet the specific needs of our ELL and Hispanic population, Peachtree will implement the following improvement plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development to understand the needs of Latino parents • Develop a partnership with the Latino American Association in order to offer programs to the students and parents (see info below) • Enlist the support of Latino parent leaders • Seek grants to offer after-school tutoring
38	<p><i>Advisement Period</i></p> <p>Guidance counselors will assign 15 to 20 students to each faculty member and provide guiding questions on different topics and issues. Advisory groups discuss issues such as careers, time management, service learning and citizenship.</p>
34-35	Add reference on increasing ESOL and gifted endorsement and specifics about differentiation
48	Add information regarding Third Renewal Process
33, 46	Add information about PTO Manager, additional Partners in Education, number of volunteer hours, Constant Contact
43	Add information about the Academic Teams

53-54, Appendix H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add to Election of Officers the position of Corresponding Secretary • Add to Curriculum and Instruction—"Talk Teams" for teachers—serves three purposes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allows for open discussion during grade level meetings on items to be addressed by the Executive Council and/or Action Teams 2. Provides an opportunity for a teacher leader at each grade level 3. Provides a potential teacher representative from each grade level on the Charter Council (if we want to ensure that this happens, then we would also add it into the Election of Officers section) 4. Add to Election of Officers: For improved continuity and a productive transition the new Executive Council Officers shall be duly elected during the May transition meeting. 5. The nominating committee, appointed by the Executive Council, shall actively recruit a committed and capable slate of candidates that are representative of the demographics of the school for all open Executive Council seats.
66	With respect to the principal position, the PTCC Executive Council will have the opportunity to meet <i>all</i> candidates and provide input prior to final selection by DCSS.
	Eliminate Rental Usage Fees
40	Add State and Federally Mandated Services Disclaimer
Throughout	Change any reference to PTA/Governance Council to Parent Teacher Charter Council and Executive Council
State Waiver	<p>#1 SBOE Rule IDEA 160-4-2-.05 MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM CRITERIA</p> <p>#2 Exemption to A+ Education Form Act of 2000</p> <p>#3 Exemption to Regulation of Certified Professional Personnel</p> <p>#4 Right to purchase textbooks and other instructional materials not on the approved County textbook list with funds previously allocated for textbooks without seeking additional funding from DCSS. Materials will be aligned with GPS and national guidelines (O. C. G. A. 20-2-10-10)</p> <p>#5 Waiver from class size for Gifted and ELL – State Board Rule 160-6-1-.08</p>
County Waivers	<p>#1 Attendance Policies (SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.10 JBD)</p> <p>#2 Dress Standard</p> <p>#3 Curriculum pacing, grading policies, benchmark tests, and requirements of non-negotiable expectations.</p> <p>#4 Increased site flexibility with staff contractual hours.</p> <p>#5 Require teachers to commit to the tenets of the Charter.</p> <p>#6 Principal will have autonomous authority to utilize FTE funds at no additional cost to the County school system.</p> <p>#7 Executive Council of the Parent Teacher Charter Council will meet candidates and provide input to the DCSS human resources department into the selection of the principal.</p> <p>#8 Principal will have autonomous authority to assign community volunteers to assist in educational and extracurricular programs to serve the needs of the students.</p> <p>Delete waiver regarding building rental fees</p> <p>Delete registration waiver – registration is year-round.</p>

Were termination proceedings initiated during the current charter term? If so, what is the status of those proceedings?

Termination proceedings were not initiated during the current charter term.

Part IV. Conversion Charter School Petition Requirements

Address the following requirements and insert the appropriate page number(s) of the petition.

CHARTER SCHOOL/PETITIONER INFORMATION

1. Page 4 Provide the name under which the charter school will operate.
2. Page 4 Provide the name of the primary contact for the petitioner.
3. Page 4 and 6 Provide the name of the school representative authorized to execute the charter contract.
4. Page 6 List the proposed grade levels and ages of students to be served by the charter school.
5. Page 6 State the proposed duration of the school's charter.
6. Page 5 Please provide a statement that the petitioner has held the appropriate votes, by secret ballot, required pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2064(a) (1) and (2) and describe the procedures and outcomes of these votes. Please note that each faculty or instructional staff member shall have one vote and a student's parent(s) or guardian (s) shall collectively have one vote for each student enrolled in the school. See the GA DOE Cover Letter

STATEMENT OF MISSION

7. Page 7 Describe the charter school's mission.
8. Page 7 Describe how the charter school's mission supports the legislative intent to "increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation."
9. Page 7-10, 63-66 Describe the autonomy that the conversion school shall have from the local school system. This statement shall include, among other things, a description of how financial resources will be managed; how human resources will be managed and personnel evaluated; the extent to which parents, community members, and other stakeholders will participate in the governance of the school; and any other innovative practices the school intends to implement. The DeKalb Board of Education cannot delegate their constitutional authority to control and manage those schools within the county to any other entity. Petitioner must be careful to not request freedom from control and management from the local board to prevent denial of charter.
10. Page 24-45, 51-62 Describe any policies, procedures, and practices or any innovations that will materially distinguish the conversion school from the school's pre-conversion model. If the school intends to use any of the same policies or procedures used by DeKalb please include copies or references to such policies and procedures.

DESCRIPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

11. Page 34-40 Describe the focus of the curriculum.
12. Page 34-40 Describe the instructional methods to be used in the charter school, including any distinctive or unique instructional techniques or educational programs.
13. Page 40 Describe the anticipated teacher-to-student ratio and the rationale for maintaining this ratio. Please see State Board Rule 160-5-1-.08, Class Size, for guidance and compliance.
14. Page 6, 34, 61 Describe the students the charter school will serve, including students with special needs and disabilities.
15. Page 61 Describe how the charter school will meet the needs of students identified as gifted and talented.
16. Page 62 Describe any extracurricular or other auxiliary educational activities the charter school may offer.
17. Page N/A If this is a charter high school, describe how the charter high school will determine that a student has satisfied the requirements for high school graduation, including the credits or units to be earned and the completion credentials to be awarded.

STATE AND FEDERALLY MANDATED SERVICES

18. Page 61 For students with disabilities, describe how the charter school will provide state- and federally mandated services.
19. Page 61 For English Language Learners (ELL), describe how the charter school will provide state- and federally mandated services.
20. Page 61 State that the charter school shall comply with all federal special education laws and regulations, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
21. Page 41 Describe how the charter school will provide supplemental educational services in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03 and NCLB.
22. Page 41 Describe how the charter school will provide remediation in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01 and NCLB.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

23. Page 24-33, 41 List the school's performance-based goals and measurable objectives and describe how these goals and objectives are in the public interest and shall result in improvement of student achievement. These goals must be related to state and federal assessment standards. Describe how these academic goals and measurable objectives will comply with single statewide accountability system. For each goal, provide measurable objectives that address each grade and content area for each year of the charter term. Academic goals should be rigorous, yet realistic and attainable, and developed in connection with the student's baseline achievement levels. Please see definition of public interest in Descriptor Code IBB.
24. Page 10, 63-66. Describe the organizational and management performance-based goals and measurable objectives for the charter school. Organizational and management goals and measurable objectives should describe and measure the effectiveness, viability and competency of the organization, which may include, for example, financial management and performance, operational management, and satisfaction of a range of stakeholders.

WAIVERS

25. Page 63-66 State whether the charter school will utilize the broad flexibility from law, rule, and regulation permitted by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(a). The DeKalb County Board of Education is not inclined to accept a blanket waiver. List waivers requested and describe how each waiver will support student academic achievement. Please see Item 25 below.
26. Page N/A If the school *will* utilize this flexibility, state that the charter school will comply with all the requirements of the Single Statewide Accountability System and will meet or exceed the performance-based goals included in the charter.
27. Page N/A If the school *will NOT* utilize this flexibility, list the specific waivers requested and the rationale for each. Describe further how each waiver will help the school meet or exceed the performance-based goals included in its charter.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSESSMENT METHODS

28. Page 24-31, 41 Describe the charter school's assessment plan to obtain student performance data for each student including the student's baseline achievement data, which will be used in connection with the academic performance-based goals and measurable objectives stated in the petition.
29. Page 61 Explain how the charter school will work with the local school system to participate in all state-mandated assessments.
30. Page 24-31 Describe how the charter school's assessment plan will measure student improvement and over what period of time.
31. Page 24-41 Describe how the charter school intends to use this assessment data to monitor and improve achievement for students.

32. Page 61 State that the charter school will not waive the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-14-30 through § 20-14-41 and federal accountability requirements.

DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS

33. Page 45 Describe the attendance zone for the charter school.
34. Page 45 Describe the rules and procedures that will govern the admission of students to the charter school.
35. Page Appendix B Describe or attach a copy of any admissions application the charter school proposes to use.
36. Page 45 Describe whether the charter school will use any enrollment priorities pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a)(1).
37. Page 45 Describe the steps that will be taken to reach students representative of the racial and socioeconomic diversity in the community.
38. Page 32, Appendix F Describe the rules and procedures concerning student discipline and student dismissal (including code of conduct and student due process procedures).
39. Page 49 Describe the rules and procedures concerning how the school will address grievances and complaints from students, parents, and teachers.
40. Page 58 Describe how and by whom the principal's performance will be appraised.
41. Page 58 Generally describe the charter school's employment procedures and policies.
42. Page 58 Specifically, state whether certification by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GAPSC) will be required.
43. Page N/A If certification by the GAPSC is *not* required, describe the training and experience that will be required.
44. Page N/A If certification by the GAPSC is *not* required, describe the charter school's procedure for determining whether a teacher has demonstrated competency in the subject area(s) in which he/she will teach as required by NCLB.
45. Page Appendix M Describe whether the charter school will use the state salary schedule, and if another schedule will be used, provide that schedule.
46. Page 58 Describe the charter school's procedures to ensure that staff members are subject to fingerprinting and background checks.
47. Page 45 Describe whether transportation services will be provided and, if so, provide a brief description of the transportation program for the school.
48. Page 45 If transportation services *are* provided, state that the transportation program will comply with applicable law.
49. Page 45 If transportation services *are not* provided, describe how this will not be a barrier to eligible students to attend school.
50. Page 61 Describe whether food services will be provided (including participation in federal school meal programs).
51. Page 61 If food services *will* be provided, briefly describe the proposed program.

FACILITIES

52. Page 61 Describe the school facility to be used and its location and whether any alterations are expected to be made.
53. Page Appendix L Provide a Certificate of Occupancy, or a timeline for obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy, prior to students occupying the proposed facility.
54. Page Appendix K Provide the school's emergency safety plan, or in the alternative an assurance that the charter school will prepare a safety plan in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185 and will submit and obtain approval of that plan from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency by a specified date.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 55. Page 46-48 Describe how parents, community members, and other interested parties were involved in developing the petition.
- 56. Page 51-57 Describe how parents, community members, and other interested parties will be involved in the school including in the governing body of the school.

DEMONSTRATION OF FISCAL FEASIBILITY AND CONTROLS

- 57. Page 58-60 Describe the level of autonomy the charter school will have over budgets and expenditures.
- 58. Page 59 State that the charter school will be subject to an annual financial audit either by an independent Georgia-licensed certified public accountant or by the State Auditor.
- 59. Page N/A Describe how the school's enrollment count will be determined for purposes of calculating charter school funding pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2068.1(c).
- 60. Page 61 Provide a statement that the charter school will comply with the federal monitoring requirements for schools receiving federal funds.
- 61. Page 58-60 Describe the plans, if any, for securing other sources of funding, including funding from corporations, individuals, foundations, philanthropic groups, or any other source.

DESCRIPTION OF GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

- 62. Page 63 State whether the charter school will utilize a governing board, or a local school council as provided for in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-85.
- 63. Page 52-61 and Bylaws in Appendix H, I If the charter school will use a board other than a local school council, state that it will be subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 *et seq.* (Open and Public Meetings) and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 *et seq.* (Inspection of Public Records).
- 64. Page 51-57, Appendix H, I If the charter school will utilize a governing board, describe the board's function, duties, and composition.
- 65. Page 52, Appendix H, I Describe how and when governing board members will be selected, how long each governing board member will serve, and how governing board members may be removed from office.
- 66. Page 53 Describe how the governing board will ensure that current and future board members avoid conflicts of interest.
- 67. Page 55 Disclose any potential conflicts of interest of the governing board members, and describe how the governing board will ensure that current and future board members avoid conflicts of interest.
- 68. Page 51-52 Describe the governing board's role in upholding the school's mission and vision.
- 69. Page 58 Describe how the governing board will appraise the principal's performance.
- 70. Page Appendix H Describe how the governing board will ensure effective organizational planning and financial stability.
- 71. Page 49-50 Describe the governing board's role in resolving teacher, parent, and student grievances and other conflicts.
- 72. Page 49 State that the governing board shall be subject to the control and management of the local board.
- 73. Page 51-57 Describe how parents, community members, or other interested parties will be involved in the charter school's governing board.
- 74. Page 46 List any proposed business arrangements or partnerships with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, or nonprofit organizations and disclose any potential conflicts of interest.
- 75. Page 49-50 Describe the method that the local board and the charter school plan to utilize for resolving conflicts.
- 76. Page N/A State if the charter school intends to contract, or has contracted for, the services of a for-profit entity or any other educational management agency. For an existing county school under the operation and management of the local board, this item is not applicable.

STATEMENT ON ANNUAL REPORT

77. Page 48 Provide a statement acknowledging that the charter school shall, by October 1, submit an annual report that includes all State-mandated assessment and accountability scores and complies with all requirements set out in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2067.1(c)(1)-(6). This report shall be submitted to the Charter School Review Office (CSRO) at the same time.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS/APPENDICES

78. Page Appendix A Attach the charter school's proposed annual calendar and a draft of the charter school's daily school schedule. The petitioner shall adopt the same testing schedule as the school system.
79. Page Appendix B Attach a copy of any admissions application the charter school seeks to use.
80. Page N/A Attach a copy of any intended contracts for the provision of educational management services or the provision of supplemental educational services and remediation. Such contracts shall describe the specific services for which the contracting organizations responsible. In case of a management organization, such contracts shall clearly delineate the respective roles and responsibilities of the management organization and the governing board in the management and operation of the charter school.

HIGH SCHOOL CLUSTER CHARTER PETITION

**** Complete this section only if the petition seeks to create a cluster charter by converting to charter schools, through a single petition, a public high school and all of the public middle and public elementary schools which contain students who matriculate to such high school.***

81. Page N/A Describe the rationale for petitioning as a high school cluster, such as consistency of academic calendar or educational approach.
82. Page N/A Describe how each school shall be held accountable for performance goals stated in the charter including Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).
83. Page N/A Describe how the high school cluster as a whole shall be held accountable for performance goals stated in the charter.

SCHOOL IN NEEDS IMPROVEMENT- Required only if the petition seeks to convert a school in Needs Improvement to a charter school. Chartering can be a dramatic and comprehensive intervention in a low-performing school that can produce significant gains in student achievement within the charter term. Please use this section of the petition to explain how you intend to accomplish this goal. The overarching theme of this and other responses should be to demonstrate where the school is pre-charter, what steps the school will take post-charter that would not otherwise be possible without the flexibility offered by chartering and how this will increase student achievement.

84. Page N/A Explain why the school is in Needs Improvement. If the school has been in Needs Improvement for three years or more, please discuss the steps the school has taken to make AYP and any progress the school has made.
85. Page N/A Describe the proposed changes to the learning environment (e.g. changes in the school culture, creation of school-based rituals, development for mentor, advisor, and teacher relationships) and how these changes will enable the school to make Adequate Yearly Progress.
86. Page N/A Describe the proposed changes to the teaching environment (e.g. changes to the curriculum including remediation and accelerated learning programs, professional development innovations including teacher evaluations, changes in staffing and recruitment, merit based pay, longer school day/year) and how these changes will enable the school to make Adequate Yearly Progress.

87. Page N/A Describe the proposed changes to school level decision making (e.g. change in school leadership, ability of the principal to select and assign staff positions without regard to seniority, more decision making authority for teachers and parents, increased community involvement) and how these changes will enable the school to make Adequate Yearly Progress.
88. Page N/A Describe any other changes that will result if your school uses chartering as a school improvement strategy.

Peachtree Charter Middle School

Charter for 2010-2015

Mission Statement

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

Goals and Performance Objectives

Our main goal in creating the initial charter for Peachtree was to improve student achievement because of discrepancies observed on standardized test scores in the achievement of various student subgroups: White, African-American, Hispanic, and Students with Disabilities. Research undertaken in preparation for creating the charter indicated that we could improve student achievement in the areas of reading and mathematics by increasing parental involvement, increasing the use of technology, and improving school climate.

Percentage of Level One Eighth Grade Students

	CRCT Reading			CRCT Mathematics		
	2000-01	2007-08	Change	2000-01	2007-08	Change
African-American	13	0	-13	37	20	-17
Hispanic	45	16	-29	68	30	-38
Students with Disabilities	36	5	-31	79	40	-39
All Eighth Grade	11	3	-8	28	13	-15

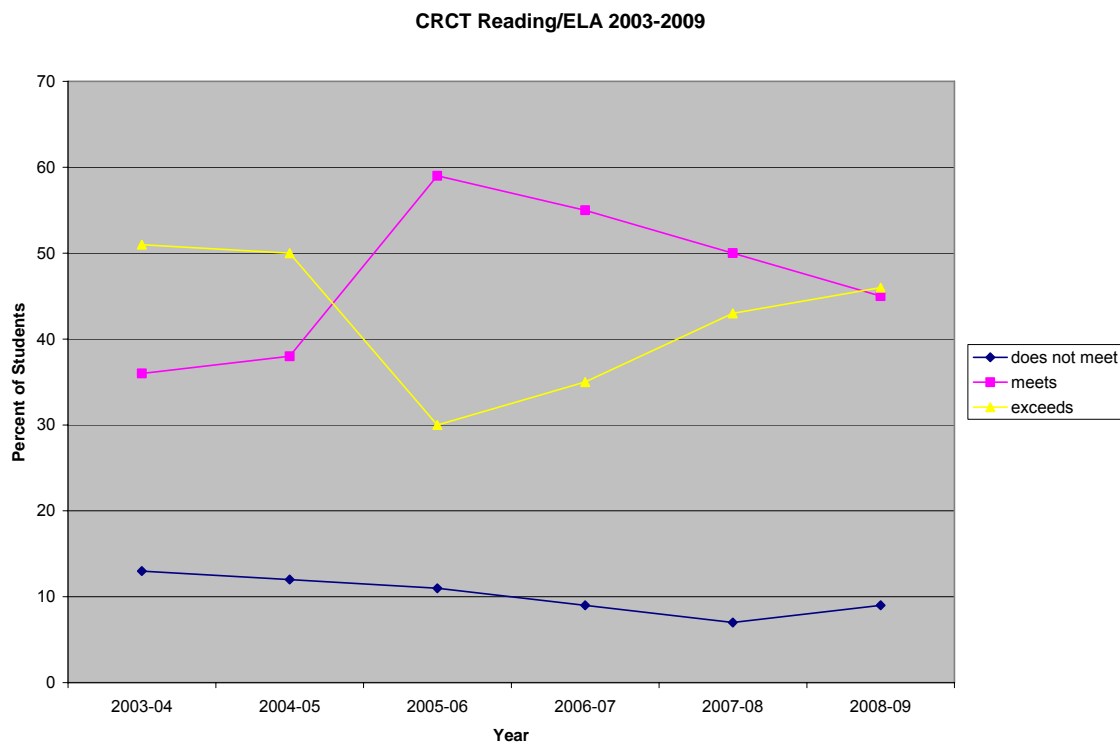
PCMS has continued to make improvements in the lowering of the number of Level 1 students in the indicated subgroups. This chart demonstrates that there has not only been a decrease in the number of Level 1 students, but also a narrowing of the achievement gap. With the increased rigor of the Georgia Performance Standards and the rising AMO, Peachtree needs to continue utilization of the instructional strategies outlined in the charter. Those strategies have allowed us to make these improvements, and we need to continue to use them as we strive to meet the AMO.

Peachtree Charter Middle School is committed to increasing student achievement. Academically, Charter status allows us to utilize flexible scheduling to allow for a variety of learning activities, grouping and regrouping students for instruction, and common planning time for teachers grouped by academic team. Waivers for class size and teacher certification allows us to utilize our staff outside their certification specialties in student enrichment such as technology instruction and change the dynamics of classes by lowering the student to teacher ratio from the state standard for general education students as budgets and teacher points permit.

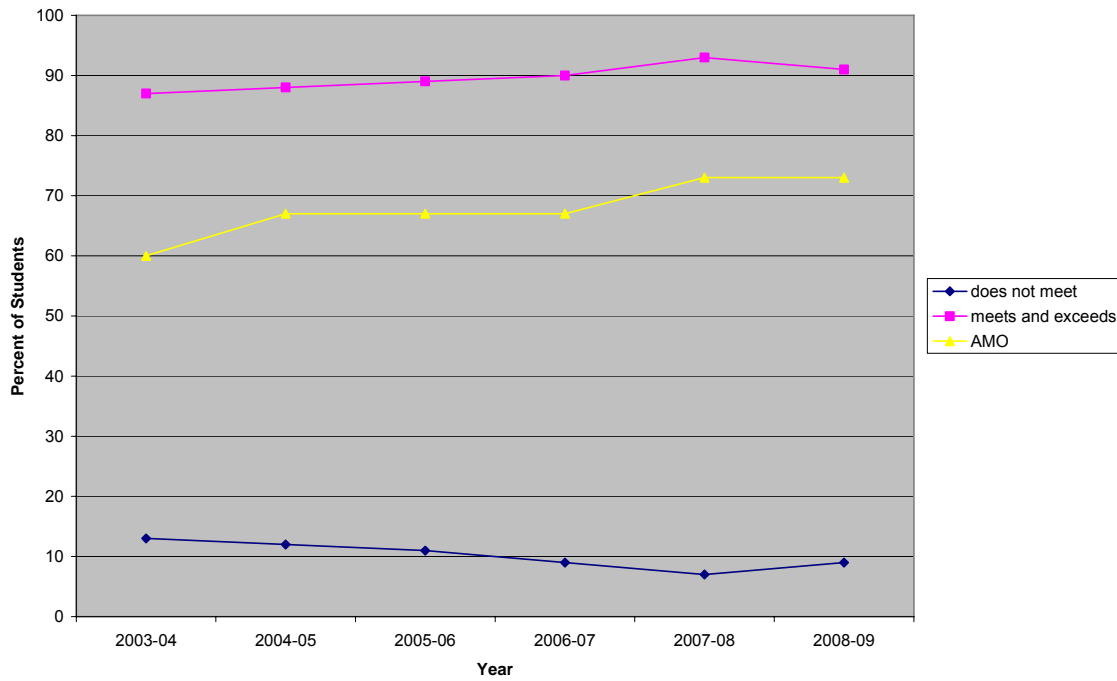
Charter status allows the flexibility needed to schedule a varied range of exploratory opportunities for students by allowing them to participate in music, technology, world language (7th and 8th grades), and physical education courses. As a result, students develop skills and explore interests that 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.

Organizationally, Charter status involves our parents in decision-making and school governance through the governing Executive Council and the Parent Teacher Charter Council. During our years as a charter school, we have seen increased parental involvement and communication with the school. Research shows that parental involvement is a key indicator of a student's academic and personal success. Our motto of "Teamwork Makes the Dream Work" is our guiding philosophy in increasing student achievement.

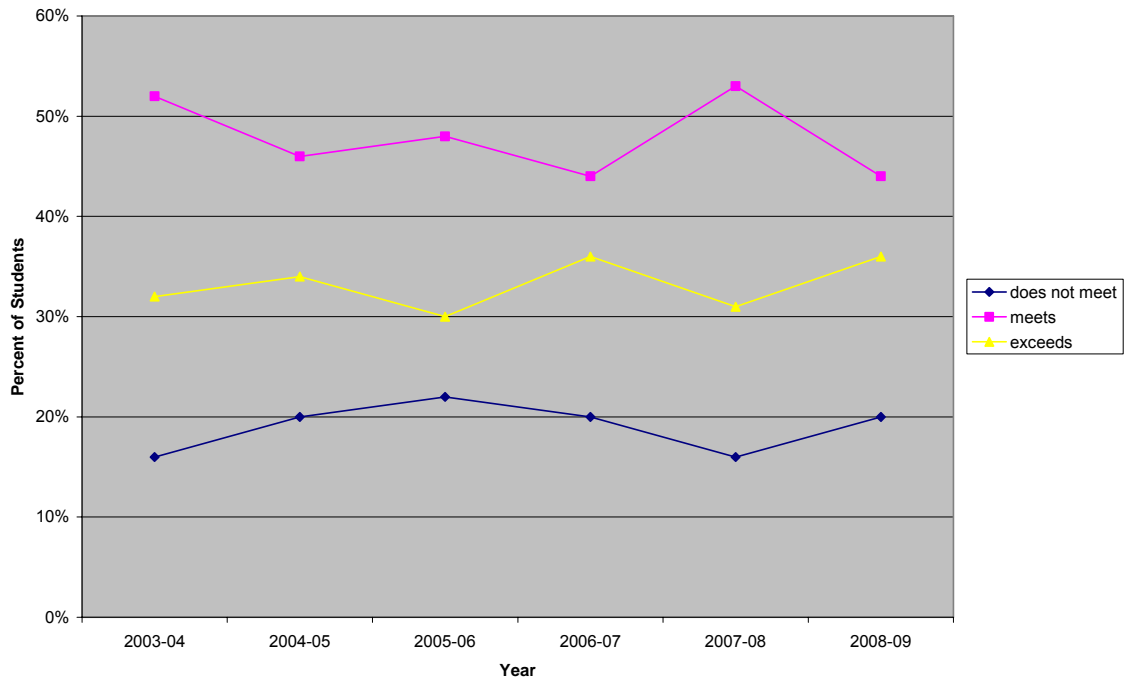
The following charts show the percent of students whose scores met, did not meet, and exceeded on the Reading/ELA and Mathematics portions of the CRCT from 2003 to 2009. While this data indicates what we have been doing under the charter has been working, this does not mean that we have accomplished our goals.



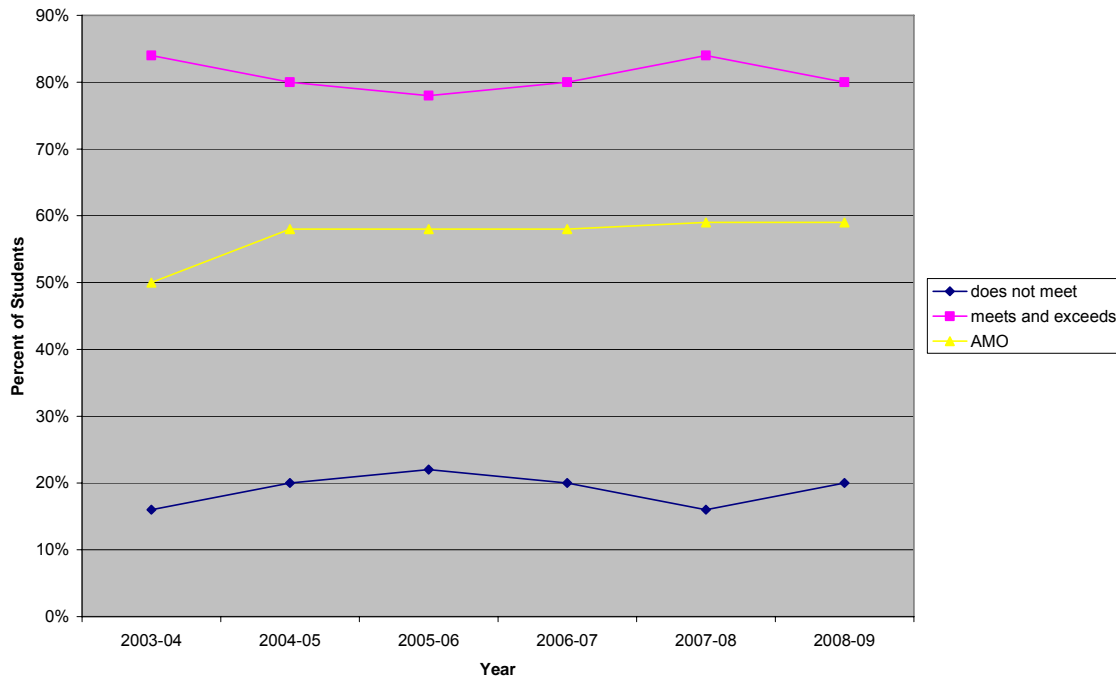
CRCT Reading/ELA 2003-2009 AMO Comparison



CRCT Mathematics 2003-2009



CRCT Mathematics 2003-2009 AMO Comparison



We recognize that we can be more ambitious with our goals. Peachtree will work to specifically close the racial achievement gap by 50% for African American students and by 30% for Hispanic students over the five years of our charter. The baseline data used is the 2008-09 disaggregated data for white, African American and Hispanic students. The gap between exceeds for white and African American students will decrease as follows: 30%, 35%, 40%, 45%, 50%. The gap between exceeds for white and Hispanic students will decrease as follows: 10%, 15%, 20%, 25%, 30%.

a. Goal: To increase reading/ELA comprehension in grades six through eight.

Performance Objectives:

- As measured on the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) and by the end of the term of the charter, 100% of the Peachtree students will meet or exceed the annual measureable objectives in the areas of reading and English Language Arts. In the 2006 – 2007 school year, 31 students entered sixth grade in Level One reading. Nineteen of these students remained at Peachtree all three years. Nine of these students have scored out of Level One in the latest test administration. The goal was 6%, we exceeded our goal with a 47% improvement.
- See “Details on Goals a, b, and d” on p. 31 for evaluation specifics

		2008-09 (Baseline)	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14 (NCLB)	2014-2015
CRCT Reading/ ELA	Does Not Meet	9%	7%	5%	4%	2%	0%	0%
	Meets	45%	42%	41%	39%	38%	37%	34%
	Exceeds	46%	51%	54%	57%	60%	63%	66%
	Meets + Exceeds	91%	93%	95%	96%	98%	100%	100%
	AMO (meets + exceeds)	73.3%	73.3%	80.0%	86.7%	93.3%	100%	100%

b. Goal: To increase mathematical abilities in grades six through eight;

Performance Objectives:

- As measured on the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT),) and by the end of the term of the charter, 100% of the Peachtree students will meet or exceed the annual measureable objectives in the area of mathematics. In the 2006 – 2007 school year, 94 students entered Peachtree scoring Level One in math. Sixty-four of those students remained for all three years. Nineteen of the 64 have moved out of Level One after the latest set of test scores. We exceeded our goal of 6%, with approximately 27.7% of the Level One students performing math computations on or above grade level by the end of grade eight.
- See “Details on Goals a, b, and d” on p. 31 for evaluation specifics

		2008-09 (Baseline)	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14 (NCLB)	2014-2015
CRCT Math	Does Not Meet	20%	16%	12%	8%	4%	0%	0%
	Meets	44%	45%	46%	47%	48%	49%	48%
	Exceeds	36%	39%	42%	45%	48%	51%	52%
	Meets + Exceeds	80%	84%	88%	92%	96%	100%	100%
	AMO (meets + exceeds)	59.5%	67.6%	75.7%	83.8%	91.9%	100%	100%

c. Goal: To improve students’ and teachers’ ability to use technology effectively and appropriately.

Performance Objectives:

- All of Peachtree's faculty will continue to participate in staff development sessions in the effective integration of technology into each respective content area along with modeling appropriate use of technology to students.
- We will add one new Promethean board each year to the building, adding five during the next five years to the 14 in place as of the end of the 2009-2010 school year.
- 100% of the certified faculty will create and maintain active Web pages.
- 100% of teachers will incorporate technology into weekly lesson plans.
- The Facilities Action Team will assess the needs and recommend appropriate technologies to add to classrooms, funded by grants and community/business donations. Technology may include laptops, audio and video hardware, and television production equipment as well as software for desktop publishing, language translation and/or instruction, and multimedia authoring.
- Lesson plans will be posted in MPEE Lesson Plans.
- Peachtree students will be able to use word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software to produce grade-level appropriate print-based products. Since a large percentage of our students participate in Band and Orchestra, the traditional 7-period day does not allow them to have instruction in technology and software. Therefore, we will utilize flexible scheduling, adding technology instruction in rotation with Physical Education classes, led by PE teachers.
- Specific assessments to be determined—see Appendix N: Middle School Technology Literacy Assessment

d. **Goal: To close the racial achievement gap.**

Performance Objectives:

- PCMS will use the CRCT to calculate the achievement gap among our African-American and Hispanic students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.
- Our baseline data will be the 2008-2009 school year student achievement data.
- By 2009-2010, PCMS will decrease the achievement gap by 30% for African American students and by 10% for Hispanic students.
- By 2010-2011, PCMS will decrease the achievement gap by 35% African American Students and by 15% for Hispanic students.
- By 2011-2012, PCMS will decrease the achievement gap by 40% for African American students and by 20% for Hispanic students.
- By 2013-2014, PCMS will decrease the achievement gap by 45% for African American students and by 25% for Hispanic students.
- By 2014-2015, PCMS will decrease the achievement gap by 50% for African American students and by 30% for Hispanic students.
- See "Details on Goals a, b, and d" on p. 31 for evaluation specifics

White Students	2009-10 (Baseline)	
	Exceed	Does not meet
Grade 6		
Reading	67	2
ELA	67	2
Math	40	7
Grade 7		
Reading	51	2
ELA	59	2
Math	59	7
Grade 8		
Reading	69	1
ELA	54	1
Math	55	6

% Indicates performance on the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test

African American Students	2008-09 (Baseline)		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14 (NCLB)		2014-15	
	Exceed	Does not meet	Exceed	Does not meet	Exceed	Does not meet	Exceed	Does not meet	Exceed	Does not meet	Exceed	Does not meet
Grade 6			30%		35%		40%		45%		50%	
Reading	30	8	41	6	43	4	45	2	47	0	49	0
ELA	27	12	39	8	41	5	43	3	45	0	47	0
Math	12	36	20	20	22	10	23	5	25	0	26	0
Grade 7			30%		35%		40%		45%		50%	
Reading	23	14	31	9	33	5	34	1	36	0	37	0
ELA	29	14	38	9	40	5	41	1	43	0	44	0
Math	19	26	31	18	33	10	35	2	37	0	39	0
Grade 8			30%		35%		40%		45%		50%	
Reading	35	2	45	1	47	0	49	0	50	0	52	0
ELA	28	7	36	5	38	3	39	1	40	0	41	0
Math	17	15	28	9	30	5	32	1	34	0	36	0

Hispanic Students	2008-09 (Baseline)		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14 (NCLB)		2014-15	
	Exceed	Does not meet	Exceed	Does not meet	Exceed	Does not meet	Exceed	Does not meet	Exceed	Does not meet	Exceed	Does not meet
Grade 6			10%		15%		20%		25%		30%	
Reading	20	20	25	14	27	8	29	2	32	0	34	0
ELA	15	30	20	20	23	11	25	2	28	0	31	0
Math	8	51	11	38	13	25	14	12	16	0	18	0
Grade 7			10%		15%		20%		25%		30%	
Reading	7	28	11	21	13	14	15	7	17	0	19	0
ELA	9	29	14	22	17	15	19	8	22	0	24	0
Math	11	30	16	20	18	11	21	2	23	0	25	0
Grade 8			10%		15%		20%		25%		30%	
Reading	15	11	20	8	23	5	26	3	29	0	31	0
ELA	15	31	19	20	21	11	23	2	25	0	27	0
Math	11	55	15	39	18	26	20	13	22	0	24	0

Details on Goals a, b, and d

Student achievement is directly related to student engagement. Students must be engaged in meaningful work that involves real-world problem solving, exploration of their own ideas, self-reflection and self-monitoring (Wasserstein, 1995). Meaningful student engagement is required to assist Peachtree in raising student achievement in reading/ELA, mathematics, and in closing the racial achievement gap. To assess this requirement, we will use specific survey questions from the school improvement survey to obtain data from student perspectives (See Appendix O). The goal will be for a combined 100% strongly agree and agree response from students. In addition, we will develop observation instruments for classrooms and lesson plans to evaluate the level of student engagement. Differentiation strategies also affect student engagement, and specific survey questions from the school improvement survey will be used to obtain data from both student and parent perspectives.

Student School Improvement Survey Baseline data 2009-2010

Question: The activities we do in class keep my attention and help me learn.

70% of the students surveyed Strongly Agreed/Agreed.

Year 1: By 2010-2011, Peachtree will increase levels of engagement by 10%--80% of the students surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.

Year 2: By 2011-2012, Peachtree will increase levels of engagement by 15%--85% of the students surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.

Year 3: By 2012-2013, Peachtree will increase levels of engagement by 20%--90% of the students surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.

Year 4: By 2013-2014, Peachtree will increase levels of engagement by 25%--95% of the students surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.

Year 5: By 2014-2015, Peachtree will increase levels of engagement by 30%--100% of the students surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.

Student School Improvement Survey Baseline data 2009-2010

Question: My teachers allow me to do something different or move to the next topic when I already understand what is being taught.

43% of students Strongly Agreed/Agreed.

Year 1: By 2010-2011, Peachtree will increase the use of differentiation strategies by 15%--58% of the students surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.

Year 2: By 2011-2012, Peachtree will increase the use of differentiation strategies by 27%--70% of the students surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.

Year 3: By 2012-2013, Peachtree will increase the use of differentiation strategies by 37%--80% of the students surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.
 Year 4: By 2013-2014, Peachtree will increase the use of differentiation strategies by 47%--90% of the students surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.
 Year 5: By 2014-2015, Peachtree will increase the use of differentiation strategies by 57%--100% of the students surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.

Parent School Improvement Survey Baseline data 2009-2010
 Question: Teachers adjust instruction to meet my child's needs.
 74% of the parents surveyed Strongly Agreed/Agreed.

Year 1: By 2010-2011, Peachtree will increase the use of differentiation strategies by 10%--84% of the parents surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.
 Year 2: By 2011-2012, Peachtree will increase the use of differentiation strategies by 16%--90% of the parents surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.
 Year 3: By 2012-2013, Peachtree will increase the use of differentiation strategies by 19%--93% of the parents surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.
 Year 4: By 2013-2014, Peachtree will increase the use of differentiation strategies by 22%--96% of the parents surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.
 Year 5: By 2014-2015, Peachtree will increase the use of differentiation strategies by 26%--100% of the parents surveyed will Strongly Agree/Agree.

e. Goal: To develop a more positive school climate through school-wide discipline, character education, and by developing intercultural awareness to enhance the academic environment.

Performance Objectives:

- All of Peachtree's certified staff will participate in staff development sessions for the school-wide discipline plan. The teachers will be assessed on their effective use of the plan through the standard evaluation procedures of the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP), the Georgia Teacher Observation Instrument (GTOI), and the Georgia Teacher Duties and Responsibilities Instrument (GTDRI).
- Annually, all of Peachtree's certified staff will participate in staff development sessions to assess the school-wide discipline plan and make recommendations to the School Climate Action Team.
- Discipline referrals and in-school suspensions shall be reduced by 10% annually. In the 2008-2009 school year, there were 858 incident referrals. That will serve as our baseline data.

Charter Renewal Year #1 2010-2011 - Referrals should reduce to 772
 Charter Renewal Year #2 2011-2012 - Referrals should reduce to 695
 Charter Renewal Year #3 2012-2013 - Referrals should reduce to 624
 Charter Renewal Year #4 2013-2014 - Referrals should reduce to 562
 Charter Renewal Year #5 2014-2015 - Referrals should reduce to 506

- Teachers will implement within the curriculum examples of activities and practices drawn from a variety of cultures in order to further develop intercultural awareness.
- Students and faculty will participate in an advisement period.
- Parents and students should feel safe and welcomed in our school. Survey results indicate that a majority of parents and students do feel that way, but our goal is for 100%.
- Parent School Improvement Survey Baseline Data 2009-2010
 - Question: I feel welcomed in the school.
 91% of the parents surveyed Strongly Agreed/Agreed.

- Student School Improvement Survey Baseline Data 2009-2010
 - Question: I feel safe at school.
73% of students surveyed Strongly Agreed/Agreed
 - Question: I see adults volunteering in our school.
83% of students surveyed Strongly Agreed/Agreed

f. Goal: To continue to promote parental and community involvement.

Performance Objectives:

- Our goal is that 100% of parents will volunteer 10 hours a year at Peachtree Charter Middle School as recorded in our interactive, online volunteer sign-in program. We recognize that parents' ability and interest in volunteering vary. Therefore, we offer a continuum of opportunities for parents to volunteer, both at school and at home.
- Throughout each school year, Peachtree will involve a minimum of five (5) community organizations/business partners to enhance student life and global awareness. Peachtree is proud to state that at the close of the 2008-2009 school year the school has fourteen active partners, Bank of North Georgia, Bruster's, Cartridge World, Chick-fil-A, Domino's, Guthrie's, Huntington Learning Center, J. Alexander's, Jersey Mike's, Northside Hospital, Pearle Vision, Rita's Italian Ice, Shane's Rib Shack, Subway-Dunwoody Hall.
- Merchant Rebates programs will allow individuals to contribute to the school through everyday means – such as the Box Top program, Publix, and Georgia Natural Gas.
- PCMS will aggressively pursue grants and funding by Partners in Education, community foundations, and other civic groups.

Plan for Improvement: Academics

Flexible Staff and Flexible Curriculum

Peachtree needs the flexibility of Charter status to best serve our diverse population (see chart below). The middle school is the link between the elementary and high school. The Curriculum and Instruction Action Team will provide for the effective and efficient coordination and seamless education programs between our elementary feeder schools and Dunwoody High School. By coordinating with representative groups of teachers and administrators from each facility and DeKalb County, we will establish benchmarks and standards for the skills and levels of performance students are expected to achieve in each subject area at each grade level at Peachtree. Every teacher will know what is to be done at every grade level in his/her subject area to ensure that all students have attained the standards necessary for success and show readiness for the next grade.

CRCT Test Participants Demographics 2009	State of Georgia	DeKalb County School System	Peachtree Charter Middle School
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.1%	4%	7.9%
Black	37.5%	74.2%	21.5%
Hispanic	9.9%	9.2%	20.9%
American Indian/Alaskan	0.2%	0.1%	0
White	45.9%	9.8%	46.2%
Multiracial	3.3%	2.7%	3.4%

Team Teaching The middle school concept (Forte & Schurr, 1993) encourages team teaching to better facilitate interdisciplinary/thematic units. Students learn and remember best when learning is connected, helping them develop a unified view of their education. Students become the focus of learning, rather than the teacher.

However, because students' abilities are not always the same across all academic content areas, Peachtree individualizes each student's schedule. Cross-teaming is common among our student population as we ensure each student works at his or her appropriate level. And, as achievements change during the school year, we modify and adapt each student's academic leveling.

For that reason, Peachtree strives to vary academic levels within each team, so teachers are working with gifted, high achiever, and general education levels. Therefore, our goal of having 100% of teachers gifted endorsed means ALL students will benefit from high level instructional strategies.

Year	# Gifted Endorsed Teachers (out of 84 certified teachers on staff)
2010	28
2011	40
2012	50
2013	61
2014	72
2015	84

PCMS also has a goal of having 50% of teachers ELL endorsed as a strategy in closing the achievement gap with the ELL and OHispanic students.

Year	# ELL Endorsed Teachers (out of 84 certified teachers on staff)
2010	9
2011	16
2012	22
2013	29
2014	35
2015	42

Flexible scheduling allows for a variety of learning activities, grouping and regrouping students for instruction, and common planning time for teachers. In addition to the four core academic subjects, students have daily physical education, daily reading or World Language instruction, a varied range of exploratory opportunities (Connections Courses), as well as opportunities for focusing on affective education.

As a Charter school, teachers, faculty, staff and parents will work together to create a flexible curriculum which will address the needs of the students, even if that curriculum varies from DeKalb County programs (such as America's Choice). Peachtree will choose materials to supplement or replace DeKalb County curriculum with grant funds. In the future, Peachtree will have the option of choosing its own materials on a grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject basis upon justification and approval of the superintendent (Reference: APPENDIX J). These materials will be aligned with Georgia Performance Standards and national standards.

Peachtree has a dedicated administration and faculty. More than one-half have advanced degrees in education and many have earned extra certification in areas such as gifted education, ELL, and school administration.

Instructional Strategies

1. To develop stronger readers, we will:

- Provide a dedicated Reading program every day for every student who does not meet baseline CRCT reading benchmarks (7th and 8th grade students who do may choose a World Language course instead).
- Concentrate on writing skills in Language Arts classes in order to improve academic achievement for all students.
- Use the demographic data to drive professional development sessions to educate teachers on how to implement the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model for English Language Learners for planning curriculum, instruction, and assessment of English Language Learners (ELL).
- Provide language support and adapt the learning environment for students who do not speak the language of instruction at a level adequate to participate fully in class and school activities.
- Encourage teachers to recognize the fact that they are all language teachers and to consider the role of languages in conceptual development across the curriculum.

- Utilize Bloom's Taxonomy of Education Objectives to provide rigor and high quality instruction in an academically engaging setting to meet the specific learning needs in the areas of reading comprehension and vocabulary development.
- Schedule regular horizontal and vertical meetings to ensure a seamless English-Language Arts (ELA) program.
- Consider and value multiple forms of expression.
- Encourage students to improve their command of language as a means of communication, and to appreciate the richness of human expression through language.
- Offer before- and after-school tutorials for remediation and/or enrichment in the areas of reading comprehension and vocabulary development.
- Continue to use homogeneous grade-level groupings.
- Recognize the accomplishments of both the students and teachers in the area of reading.
- Utilize a variety of instructional programs and materials to develop better readers, writers, speakers and listeners.
- Encourage teachers and administrators to attend regional and national conferences promoting best practices in the areas of reading and ELL.
- Monitor, compile and analyze student performance data to make adjustments to the educational program so that it will better meet the needs of all students.
- Require teachers to obtain gifted and/or ELL endorsement to broaden their teaching methods.
- Encourage teachers to attend local, regional and national conferences to develop differentiated teaching practices.

2. To develop stronger mathematicians, we will:

- Use the demographic data to drive professional development sessions to educate teachers on how to implement the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model for English Language Learners for planning curriculum, instruction, and assessment of English Language Learners (ELL).
- Utilize Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives to provide rigor and high quality instruction in an academically engaging setting to meet the specific learning needs in all areas of mathematics.
- Schedule regular horizontal and vertical meetings to ensure a seamless mathematics program.
- Continue to use homogeneous grade-level groupings.
- Supplement mathematics instruction during the school day to include tutorials and/or enrichment.
- Utilize pacing charts along with pre- and post-tests to monitor mastery of projected skills at each grade level.
- Offer before- and after-school tutorials for remediation and/or enrichment in the areas of mathematical concepts, computation and problem-solving.
- Continue to teach algebra concepts at each grade level.

- Recognize the accomplishments of both the students and teachers in the area of mathematics.
- Utilize a variety of instructional programs and materials to solve problems, engage in mathematical communication, reason and evaluate mathematical arguments, make connections among mathematical ideas and to other disciplines, and to represent mathematics in multiple ways.
- Encourage teachers and administrators to attend regional and national conferences promoting best practices in the area of mathematics.
- Monitor, compile and analyze student performance data to make adjustments to the educational program so that it will better meet the needs of the students.
- Encourage teachers to obtain gifted and/or ELL endorsement to broaden their teaching methods.
- Encourage teachers to attend local, regional and national conferences to develop differentiated teaching practices.

3. *To improve students' and teachers' ability to use technology effectively and appropriately, we will:*

- Modify instruction to meet the goals and objectives of improving mathematics and reading scores by teaching basic computer skills throughout each content area at each grade level: for example, word processing skills are the focus in Language Arts, Internet Research Skills are the focus in Social Studies, spreadsheets and data display are the focus of Mathematics, and presentation software is the focus of Science.
- Use the Online Assessment System and various content-related websites to evaluate and remediate students' mastery of Georgia's Performance Standards.
- Incorporate regular technology instruction by rotating students into computer labs during PE classes throughout the school year.
- Continue to improve communication among parents/guardians, teachers and students through teacher developed web pages, weekly posting of lesson plans, team email lists, and E-news to involve the parents in the day-to-day operations of the classroom.
- The CTSS will maintain an accurate inventory of all technologies, including hardware and software, to determine the condition, location, functional use, and future needs.
- Provide training for faculty, staff and students in the appropriate use of technology utilizing professional learning opportunities provided by Metro RESA and DCSS to increase teacher effectiveness and use of best practice in all areas technology in order to improve student.
- Monitor the stakeholders' needs and uses of technology to keep abreast of current developments to increase student achievement.

4. *To develop a more positive school climate, we will:*

- Provide student-centered, proactive strategies to prevent disruptive behavior and reduce discipline problems.
- Reduce discipline problems and referrals.
- Protect student time spent on learning.

- Continue to use DeKalb County's current discipline code.
- Develop alternatives to In-School Suspension.
- Provide staff development in using the recommended school-wide discipline plan.
- Develop character education plans to encourage students and teachers to be proactive in order to prevent problems before they arise (self-discipline, caring classrooms, etc.).
- Develop intercultural awareness (This concept is concerned with developing students' attitudes, knowledge and skills as they learn about their own and others' social, religious and national cultures. It not only fosters tolerance and respect, but also leads to empathy and understanding. Developing intercultural awareness concerns everyone within the school.).
- Embed examples drawn from a variety of cultural, social, and national perspectives into the curriculum, and implement activities and practices which celebrate cultural identities.
- Allow students to consider different perspectives to develop an understanding of what is common as well as what is different.
- Encourage staff to share in the vision of inter-cultural awareness and exemplify appropriate behavior.
- Create time for staff to identify and teach the skills and knowledge necessary for students to appreciate different points of view.
- Celebrate student and teacher successes through honors programs and special recognitions.
- Provide an Advisement Period. The guidance counselors will assign 15 to 20 students to each faculty member and provide guiding questions on different topics and issues. Advisory groups discuss issues such as careers, time management, service learning and citizenship.

5. To increase parental and community involvement:

- Improve communication among parents/guardians, students, teachers, and the community.
- Involve parents and the community in order to support all of the goals outlined in the Charter.
- Encourage parent/guardian attendance at teacher conferences and Peachtree parent/guardian meetings.
- Provide training to parents on how to effectively participate through agenda planners, email, telephone calls, websites, and newsletters for example.
- Research options for tracking hours of parental involvement credit.
- Monitor commitment to the Parent/Guardian Agreement.
- Collect and evaluate data regarding parent/guardian involvement each year of the Charter.
- Develop more multicultural extracurricular programs that celebrate our diversity, including parent programs in the evening and weekends and Black History.

- Build stronger bridges with our Hispanic families who want to be involved, but are challenged by language and cultural differences, through better availability of translators (funded by grants and community volunteers) and proactive investigation and accommodation of successful parent volunteer programs at Hightower Elementary (a Title 1 School which consistently meets AYP and has strong parent participation).

6. *Teachers may elect to utilize any of the following practices to meet the needs of their students:*

- Homogeneous Grouping
- Multiple Intelligence Instructional Strategies
- Brain-Based Learning
- Inclusion
- Differentiation
- Cooperative Learning
- Accelerated Learning/Curriculum Compacting
- Project-Based Learning
- Field Trips
- Technology
- The use of Portfolios to demonstrate growth
- Pre-Assessments to determine if curriculum can be compacted
- And any other methods approved by the Curriculum and Instruction Action Team

Structure of the School Day

Peachtree will vary the framework of a seven-period day as needed with flexible scheduling that adapts to student needs. At present, our primary concern is elevating performance in reading and math as measured by the CRCT; therefore, we plan to provide reading and writing classes as separate focuses through creative scheduling. In the future, we may determine that focus must be given to science labs or social studies projects. In each case, we will modify the schedule on a daily, modified, or rotating basis as needed.

Music Programs

Peachtree's Band and Orchestra programs serve approximately 50% of the student population. These programs will continue to be offered. We will also pursue grants and community volunteers to offer a Choral program.

Connections Course Offerings

We require a minimum of five (5) Connections teachers in order to offer a variety of classes. A menu of Connections courses will be offered to students based upon parent, teacher and student surveys. Such course offerings may reflect those offered at Dunwoody High School to support their exploratory academies. For students needing remediation in academic courses, particularly math and reading, additional time may be designated for academic instruction to bring these students to grade level. This additional time may replace Connections courses. Students, at or above grade level, shall be allowed to take additional academic classes instead of Connections classes if the parent/guardian requests such assignment, subject to available space.

World Language

Peachtree Middle School will continue to offer a robust and varied World Languages program. This may include instruction in Spanish, French, German, and Latin. Other languages may be added. Because the World Language classes offer a Carnegie Unit in grade eight and due to the rigorous curriculum, only students who are reading above grade level will qualify to take a World Language. Peachtree will follow the DeKalb County Board of Education guidelines for the World Language Program.

Teacher-Student Ratio

Peachtree Charter Middle School's maximum class size will comply with State Board Rule 160-5-1-.08 CLASS SIZE, County Waivers granted by the State, and DCSS Board Policy. However, we seek the flexibility of changing the ratios for our classes to address specific issues such as discipline or science labs, regardless of academic level. Our rationale is that smaller class sizes are integral to student achievement.

State and Federally Mandated Services

Peachtree Charter Middle School is not a Title 1 school. Therefore, we are not required to provide supplemental educational services as noted in SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03, nor are we required to provide remediation as noted in SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01 and NCLB.

Ensuring Adequate Yearly Progress

In the disaggregated information below obtained from the 2007-2008 State of Georgia K-12 Public Schools Annual Report Card for Peachtree Charter Middle School in DeKalb County, we are showing adequate growth in moving Level One students to Level Two, or in moving Level Two students to Level Three. For example, in the area of mathematics:

- For 6th grade in 2005-2006, there were 60% Level One and 40% Level Two.
- In 7th grade in 2006-2007, there were 31% Level One and 66% Level Two, and 3% Level Three.
- In 8th grade in 2007-2008, there were 30% Level One, 65% Level Two, and 5% Level Three.

In following a group of students from 6th grade to 8th grade, the percent of change is as follows:

- In mathematics, we had a 50% decrease in Level One students, a 63% increase in Level Two students, and a 500% increase in Level Three students.
- In reading, we had a 52% decrease in Level One students, an 18% increase in Level Two students, and a 200% increase in Level Three students.

The data above shows that if a student comes to Peachtree in 6th grade and stays at Peachtree through 8th grade, we will help that student move from Level One to Level Two, and from Level Two to Level Three in the areas of reading and mathematics. However, while we are definitely showing growth, we are not showing enough growth to make absolute bar.

Meeting the needs of the ELL (English Language Learners) and Hispanic students is our area of needs improvement, and in order to meet the specific needs of our ELL and Hispanic population, Peachtree will implement the following improvement plans:

1. Professional development to understand the needs of Latino parents
2. Develop a partnership with the Latino American Association (LAA) in order to offer programs to the students and parents. As stated on the website for the Latino American Association, "the LAA's INSPIRA! (Inspire!) Youth Programs provide a range of services designed to improve academic achievement for Latino students. Since success in middle school is so important for high school and beyond, INSPIRA! programs are focused on helping improve middle school performance by working at the middle school, elementary and pre-school levels."
3. Enlist the support of Latino parent leaders
4. Seek grants to offer after-school tutoring.

Note: It is understood that all staffing and class size ratios are dependent upon allocation and assessment of earned points. This Charter does not require DeKalb County School Board and Administration to provide Peachtree Charter Middle School funding beyond that earned. Peachtree shall be treated the same as all other schools under the control and management of the DeKalb County Board of Education. Awarded grants or other outside bequeaths may be used for such purpose as the grants require and the Executive Council determines.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is a key organizational structure to our charter and is essential to student success, and as a charter school, we recognize this in the structure of our Executive Council. Unlike a school council, our Executive Council requires a majority of parents. In addition to improved achievement, some of the other positive results are reduced absenteeism, improved behavior, and restored confidence among parents in the education system. As noted in NEA Communications, 2002, a home environment that encourages learning is more important to student achievement than income, education level cultural background.

Plan for Improvement: School Climate

School-wide discipline will be assessed each nine-week quarter in conjunction with the Assistant Principal for Discipline and recommendations for improvements will be made to the Executive Council for modification of the school-wide discipline plan to continue to improve communication among teachers, parents, students and administrators. Teachers with a concern about a student's behavior must contact parents to schedule a conference to discuss these concerns. The Parent Agreement stipulates that parents are required to attend all parent – teacher conferences concerning their child. Teachers will also continue to use the Detention as a means to deter chronic misbehaviors. Detention provides teachers with a strong reflective, corrective consequence that does not remove the student from instructional time.

Continued disruptive behavior after detention has been assigned will result in a referral to the administration. Parents will be notified when their child has been sent to the office. These visits will be documented by telephone and a referral will be sent home with the child to be signed by the parent and returned to the administrator. Disruptive behavior, as defined in the DeKalb County School System Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, may warrant suspension from school. Behavioral plans for improvement and referrals to resource personnel as well as administrative conferences will take place each time a child is suspended out of school from Peachtree. Separate guidelines for special education students will apply in accordance with the Individual Education Plan (IEP) developed for each student.

Peachtree Charter Middle School will use the DeKalb County School System Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook to determine violations of policy and disposition of such offenses. It may be necessary to remove disruptive students from the classroom when they are interfering with the teachers' right to teach and the students' right to learn. These procedures will not conflict with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1997) and the right of special education students and students with Section 504 plans to receive a free and appropriate education.

Developing a Consistent System

Our goal is to prevent disruptive behavior, rather than punish it. The faculty and staff will teach and model appropriate behavior, and remind students of their responsibilities as members of the school community. Professional development courses in school-wide discipline will be required for all personnel. A positive middle school climate will facilitate school-wide behavior expectations with consistency and the use of positive reinforcement.

School Climate Action Team

Administrators who are members of this team will be trained in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, and a copy of the Handbook will be given to each teacher. The goal of this Team will be to ensure that consistency in handling discipline issues is delivered across all grade levels.

Communicating the Plan

The School Climate Action Team will provide updates on relevant issues through the Parent Teacher Charter Council newsletter and through the school's web site. The Executive Council will continue to encourage many parents to join this Action Team. In addition, the School Climate Action Team will evaluate means of ways to improve the school climate.

Dress Standard

Consistent with our School Climate plan, our dress standard is designed to minimize clothing that is distracting to other students and teachers or could encourage disruptive or unsafe behavior. Our current dress standard, APPENDIX K, defines a modest standard of dress for both females and males while allowing for some individual choices in colors and styles. Peachtree understands that this is an area of family discretion with a wide variety of opinions. However, the Spring 2003 Parent Survey, the 2006 Executive Council survey, and the 2008 and 2009 Parent Teacher Charter Council surveys recognized strong support for continuing the dress standard. Peachtree recognizes that having easily recognizable standards with no waivers minimizes the time teachers and staff spend defining appropriate clothing to students. Interpretations, as needed, may be made by the School Climate Action Team to the code during a school year but no waivers or significant changes will occur.

The School Climate Action Team will propose changes to the dress standard only if there is substantial interest expressed from more than one group of stakeholders (students, parents, and faculty and staff). The Action Team would do research and propose a choice of one or two viable options to the current standard for Executive Council consideration. Surveys of staff, current 6th and 7th grade families, and 5th grade families at our feeder schools would be conducted prior to any significant change. The possibility of revision will only be voted on by the Executive Council if there is a clear consensus between parents and teachers. Peachtree's dress standard will, at a minimum, adhere to the County guidelines as written in the Code of Student Conduct. Changes for the following school year must be finalized no later than March 1st of the current school year.

Academic Competition Teams

For the second year, the Peachtree Charter Middle School Foundation has sponsored Academic Competition Teams. The Foundation provides stipends for teacher sponsors and any fees required for competition. All students in all grade levels are encouraged to participate on an Academic Team. It is an enriching program in which the academic talents of our students can be highlighted. Some of the Academic Teams include the Social Studies Club, Academic Bowl, Reading Bowl, Mathletes in Action, and the Science Club. We are working on adding more teams, such as Black History Bowl, Robotics, Chess, and Odyssey of the Mind.

Attendance Policy

Introduction: All students and their parents/guardians are informed of, and agree to, the Peachtree Charter Middle School Attendance Policy at the time of enrollment. Since the purpose of the Attendance Policy is to provide maximum instructional opportunities for every student, teachers shall establish effective communication procedures with parents to ensure that every student's best interest is served. From reviewing our school's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) data, there is a direct correlation between attendance and academic performance on the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Test (CRCT).

Definition of absence and tardy: Based on DeKalb County School System Policy, a student missing four (4) or more class periods of any one school day is considered absent for that day.

A student arriving at school after the first bell (current school starting time) will be considered tardy. As we attempt to provide a secure environment, please understand it is critical that tardy students be accompanied by their parent/guardian and report to the sign-in location.

Excused Absences/Tardies defined by Peachtree School:

Excused Tardy: A tardy will be considered excused only under the following circumstances:

- Illness
- Health-Related Appointments
- Inclement weather
- Other circumstances as approved by the student's grade-level assistant principal

Excused Absence: An absence will be considered excused only under the following circumstances:

- Illness or Doctors Appointments
- Death in Family
- Religious Holiday
- Congressional Page
- Other circumstances must be referred to the Family and Community Relations and/or the School Climate Action Team
- Absence approved by the grade-level administrator prior to the absence

When a student is absent, the student's parent/guardian must notify the school attendance office as soon as possible on the day of the absence by calling 678-676-7715. If a phone call is not made to the school, then a note written by the parent/guardian must accompany the student on his/her return to school.

Absences and tardies not documented as excused in the above manner are unexcused.

Consequences for Unexcused Absences and Tardiness

Chronic/Unexcused Tardies:

As outlined in the Code of Conduct Student Rights and Responsibilities, the following apply to all unexcused tardies:

Number of Tardies	Consequences Per Occurrence
1-2	Student receives a warning. Teacher is responsible for contacting the parent(s).
3-6	Student receives 1 day detention or comparable consequence. Referred to the counselor who is responsible for contacting the parent.
7-10	Student receives a discipline referral and 1 day in-school suspension (ISS) or comparable consequence. School to schedule a student/parent conference for the purpose of signing an attendance contract.
11+	Student receives a discipline referral and ISS or comparable consequence pending a local formal hearing. Parent contacted and referral to counselor and social worker. Student is given choice of 10 days ISS, alternative school/program placement, or comparable consequence.

Unexcused Absences: As outlined in the Code of Conduct Student Rights and Responsibilities, the following apply to all unexcused tardies:

Number of Unexcused Absences	School Action Per Occurrence
1-2	School notifies parent of absence.
3-5	School notifies the parent of absence and refers student to the counselor or assistant principal, who will then meet with the student and/or parent for the purposes of discussing the reasons for the absences and signing an attendance contract.
6-7	Letter sent to parent/guardian informing him/her of the student's absences and the administrative and legal consequences of continued absence from school.
8+	Counselor will make a referral to the school social worker to conference with the parent/guardian and student for assessment and/or possible referral to Juvenile Court, Solicitor-General's Office, DFACS, or other agency.

State Law indicates that any parent/guardian who does not comply with compulsory attendance mandates (O.C.G.A 20-2-690.1[a]) shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00, imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction. Each day's absence from school in violation of this part after the child's school system notifies the parent/guardian of five unexcused days of absence shall constitute a separate offense (O.C.G.A 20-2-690.1[b]).

Make-up work: The make-up work policy will be in accordance with the DeKalb County School System Policy. On the third day of the absence, the parent/guardian should contact the counseling department for makeup assignments.

Drop Off/Pick Up: No students may be dropped off at Peachtree earlier than 30 minutes before the first bell unless involved in a scheduled activity. All students are to be picked up no later than 30 minutes after the final bell unless participating in a scheduled activity. The fourth (4th) failure to comply with this policy will result in referral to the Principal for further action.

Incentives for Timely Attendance: In an effort to positively reinforce timely attendance, we will develop reward programs, such as recognition at Honors Programs, publicizing in the PTA/PTO newsletter, team rewards, and special announcements.

Enrollment Policies

Priority will be given to students in the Primary Attendance Zone. Students shall be enrolled based on available space. If space is available, then Peachtree will accept students through the Open Enrollment Policies, however, priority will be given to a sibling of a student enrolled in the charter school and students whose parent or guardian is a member of the governing board or the charter school or is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee at the charter school as stated in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066 .

Primary 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. Our current geographic attendance zone, as determined by DCSS, 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.

Open Enrollment Policies and Lottery— The number of openings for charter school applicants for the subsequent school year will be determined by the date written in the School Choice guidelines. This number will be communicated to the Executive Council by the principal following consultation with the DeKalb County School System's Office of Student Assignment and the DeKalb County School System's Planning Office. Any student who resides within the boundaries of the DCSS and who submits a timely application as specified in the charter shall be admitted unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level or building. In such case, all such applicants shall have an equal chance of being admitted through a random selection process, pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-2066(a)(1)(B). Nothing in the enrollment policy, as stated herein, shall be construed to conflict with any obligation imposed upon the DeKalb County School System by the Federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Transportation – Transportation will be provided according to DeKalb County Policy for students residing within the PCMS primary attendance zone. Transportation to PCMS will not be provided for students outside the primary attendance zone. No student will be excluded from the Open Enrollment Lottery due to a barrier in transportation.

Stakeholder Involvement

Peachtree recognizes that 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 System, and the State School Board. Peachtree, as it has in the past, continues to depend on stakeholder involvement in its ongoing self-analysis, improvement actions, and successes.

The staff continues to have an active role in the improvement of our school. All certified staff serve actively on an Action Team as well as participate in the traditional grade-level, departmental and team meetings. The Executive Council contains five teacher representative positions with two-year terms. Open positions are publicized at staff meetings, through the intranet, and in the teacher workroom. We continue to have thoughtful, enthusiastic, dedicated candidates at each election.

During the 2007-2008 school year, Peachtree merged the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the Governance Council. Our newly-formed Parent Teacher Charter Council now functions as one, cohesive entity. The former PTA subcommittees were distributed to the different Action Teams and are represented by liaisons to the Parent Teacher Charter Council Executive Council. The Parent Teacher Charter Council is a volunteer organization of parents and teachers that works with the school's administration to support Peachtree Charter Middle School. It includes an Executive Council and, five Action Teams. The Executive Council assists coordination of the Action Teams - Curriculum & Instruction, Facilities & Equipment, Family & Community Relations, Finance, and School Climate – plus their Committees to achieve the objectives of our charter, to maintain and enhance our school culture. There are many ways to volunteer. Parent Teacher Charter Council General Meetings have fun and educational activities, plus school updates. Our charter school is successful because of the active involvement of parents and teachers.

We continue to work to develop ways to have regular communication between our student representatives and our action teams. Peachtree feels that as we prepare our students to be successful in the 21st century, their ideas, concerns and solutions should be sought and considered along with other stakeholders. It is a goal of this renewal to develop ways for increased student input.

It is the goal of this agreement to increase the number and variety of events during the school year where our Partners in Education, as well as other community businesses and organizations, sponsor and/or participate in ways to enrich and prepare our students.

Peachtree has adopted a new software package that will assist families in documenting volunteer opportunities. The school worked continuously during the year to get the families to log the opportunities via the web and are pleased to say over 6,500 hours were entered. We know more hours were donated and will work to get the families that do not have internet access the ability to submit hours as well while they are at the school but this was a great start with the new software package.

Partners in Education

Peachtree is proud to state that at the close of the 2008-2009 school year the school has fourteen active partners, Bank of North Georgia, Bruster's, Cartridge World, Chick-fil-A, Domino's, Guthrie's, Huntington Learning Center, J. Alexander's, Jersey Mike's, Northside Hospital, Pearle Vision, Rita's Italian Ice, Shane's Rib Shack, Subway-Dunwoody Hall. The terms of our relationship with each Partner are clearly defined in the Partners in Education agreement, which also bars any conflict of interest.

See Appendices H and I for PTCC Executive Council Bylaws and Flowchart of the PTCC

Original Charter Process

As part of our continuing efforts to seek a model of school improvement that places a focus on student achievement and a positive school climate, a "Research Team" of teachers was formed in September, 1999, to investigate various school improvement models. Chief among these models was the concept of the "charter school."

This team of teachers, which was a body formed by "open call" to all interested teachers, spent nearly 400 hours outside of the school day researching various school improvement and school governance structures, and made their report on November 10, 1999. They recommended that two choices go to the professional staff on secret ballot on November 17, 1999.

The two options on that ballot were:

- That a Charter School Planning Team be created for the purpose of writing a charter school application by November, 2000.
- That a Executive Council be formed to further investigate various school improvement models.

With a clear majority of ballots cast (65%), the professional staff at Peachtree voted on November 17 to form a Charter School Planning Council. That body was formed over the next two months. A letter was sent to Peachtree Parents on November 19, 1999, asking that they look for further information on this in the future because parent input and participation was critical to the process.

Once the staff membership of the Charter School Planning Council was in place, on January 10, 2000, parent members were invited to join. Once the Council was formed, it organized itself both internally (i.e. committees/teams, meeting days/times, etc.) and externally (i.e. seeking advice from other schools and community resources, publicizing its progress, etc.).

The DeKalb County Board of Education, at its meeting on the evening of February 12, 2001, voted to approve the charter school petition for Peachtree Middle School. The motion was passed with 5-0 vote with 1 member abstaining. It was noted during the debate that the petition was an excellent school improvement proposal.

After the County vote, there were some minor revisions that had to be made. Therefore, we had another vote on April 24, 2001. The results of that vote were Yes: 100% by both Staff and Parents. The next step was for the revised document to be forwarded to the DeKalb County Board of Education, and after it met approval there, it proceeded to the Georgia Board of Education for their consideration.

In their monthly meeting on May 10, 2001, the Georgia Board of Education approved the charter petition for Peachtree Middle School for a three-year period from July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2004.

First Renewal Process

A renewal committee was formed to begin drafting the Charter Renewal. At both the renewal committee and subcommittee meetings, both teachers and parents were involved. During our renewal process, public announcements (at meetings, on the web site, and automated phone calls to PTA members) were made, we sent out flyers, held meetings, and provided feedback forms. The renewal draft was available in the media center and was posted on our web site. As a result the Charter was renewed for the period of July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2007. The expiration of the current Charter requires this renewal application.

Second Renewal Process

The process of renewing the Peachtree Charter Middle School Charter was begun in January 2006 by the Executive Council with a Executive Council training session. The training session consisted to two parts as follows:

- Charter School Law and Regulations – The training session dealt with the regulations and actions of the State Board of Education as well as discussion concerning the application of the amendment to

the State Code of Georgia concerning Charter Schools as passed by the General Assembly and signed by the Governor in 2005.

- Facilitated Visioning Session - The second part of the training session consisted of a facilitated visioning session as to where the members of the Executive Council expressed their individual expectations for the improvement/enhancement of Peachtree Charter Middle School's academic, arts and sports programs. The result of the visioning session was that the Executive Council established a goal of higher levels of academic achievement while expanding the arts programs as well as the opportunity for sports programs to deal with the whole student. The overall goal was that Peachtree Charter Middle School within 10 years would be one of the top middle schools in the country.

Following the Executive Council training, two subcommittees of the Executive Council were established – a parent's committee and a faculty committee. The purpose of committees was to ascertain issues which needed to be addressed in the renewal of the charter. The Faculty Committee met with numerous faculty members as well as provided the opportunity for an open ended survey of concerns and needs. The results of the survey indicated a number of issues which were school operation oriented and would be dealt with by the administration but no Charter issues.

The Parent Committee issued a survey in the Spring of 2006 to parents with children in grades 6 and 7 since 8th graders would no longer be at PCMS. The results of the survey indicated strong parental support for academic improvement for all students as the greatest concern followed by safety and security issues. These issues have been taken into consideration in the renewal Charter document.

The renewal document was submitted to DeKalb County School System on September 8, 2006.

Third Renewal Process

The process of renewing the Peachtree Charter Middle School charter was begun in the Spring of 2008. The Parent Teacher Charter Council's Executive Council issued a survey in the Spring of 2008 and again in the Spring of 2009. In both surveys, parents agreed that it was better for their children to attend a charter school than somewhere else, and teachers believed that Peachtree, under the Charter, gives them the flexibility and authority needed to address the individual learning styles and needs of their students. In both surveys, parents and teachers felt that the dress standard is unclear.

Parental involvement is one of Peachtree's greatest advantages.

The Executive Council of both the incoming and outgoing members attended a retreat in June 2009 to work on developing a cohesive vision.

The information obtained in the surveys and the retreat is the driving forces of the renewal charter document.

With a clear majority of ballots cast, the faculty overwhelmingly (100%) approved the Charter Renewal document during the vote which was held on August 4th and 5th, 2009. The parents voted on August 5th, 2009, and also approved the Charter Renewal document.

The renewal document was submitted to DeKalb County School System on August 7, 2009.

Annual Evaluation

At the end of each school year, the Executive Council will generate an annual report which outlines the progress made in the previous school year toward meeting the goals and performance objectives. In addition to the state-mandated assessment scores, the Executive Council will solicit input from the stakeholders through an annual survey to determine the progress made. The annual report will be available to the public on or before October 1st of each year.

Charter Approval/Control and Management

As provided in the Charter and in a manner consistent with the Charter Schools Act of 1998 and the Constitution, Peachtree Charter Middle School is subject to the control and management of the DeKalb County School Board and the DeKalb County School System. Peachtree Charter Middle School does not seek freedom from control and management of the DeKalb County School System Board of Education.

Grievance Resolution

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.

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

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.
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.
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 Executive Council.
6. The Chair will refer the parent to the appropriate Action Team to seek resolution of the grievance.
7. If resolution is not possible with any of the parties above, parents may submit complaints in writing or sign up to address the Executive Council at a regularly scheduled meeting. The parent will determine if they choose to present their concern in writing only or wish to address the Council. The Council will respond to grievances, in writing, no later than 30 days after the complaint is presented to the Council.
8. Parents should remember the following when considering making a complaint to the Executive Council:
 - a. The Council 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.
 - b. The Council will not address a complaint based on hearsay or made on behalf of another parent or family or staff member.
 - c. The Council will not address complaints that are made anonymously.
 - d. The Council will not address specific complaints about the performance of individual school employees.
9. If parents still believe that their grievance has not been resolved, they may present their concerns to the Area Assistant Superintendent.

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 the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as amended, 1996.

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

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 an administrator. If resolution is still not reached, the student shall contact the Area Executive Director. Due to the age of Peachtree students, the expectation is that parents will be their child's advocate.

Peachtree Charter Middle School shall follow the State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9.04 to resolve any conflicts between DCSS and the charter school.

Executive Council and Action Teams

The Executive Council helps Peachtree achieve its mission statement by connecting the parents and teachers in decision-making and school governance. The Action Teams and the Executive Council are composed of both parents and teachers. Parents on the Executive Council get the parents out into the school and involved in helping the students succeed. Teachers on the Executive Council get the teachers out of their classrooms to see the bigger picture.

Executive Council

The Executive Council represents a cross-section of our school and community. The Executive Council exists to coordinate and facilitate the efforts of school and community in order to enhance and ensure student success. The Executive Council:

- Gives all members of the Peachtree community a voice and stake in our school.
- Provides leadership, direction, and support to Actions Teams to facilitate the School Improvement Plan.
- Identifies the needs and maximizes the achievement of all students.
- Gives ownership and accountability for Peachtree's mission and School Improvement Plan.
- Improves communication and fosters involvement among the Peachtree community.

This Charter School Executive Council will be used in lieu of the school council as defined in the A+ Education Reform Act of 2000.

Responsibilities

The Executive Council will:

- Support Peachtree's vision, mission and Charter.
- Gather ideas and feedback from Action Teams, faculty and staff, families and community.
- Make decisions on recommendations from Action Teams.
- Review and make recommendations to the principal on school-wide issues—such as accountability, budgetary issues, space issues, programs and curriculum ideas.
- Establish goals and objectives for the coming year.
- Assess the degree to which goals were met for all students for the previous year.
- Oversee the preparation and publishing of the annual summary.
- Evaluate Peachtree's Charter: policies, procedures, operations, and propose amendments.
- Ensure all decisions and actions are consistent with the Charter.
- Refer individual/personal grievances to the appropriate staff member.
- Monthly meetings in which the budget is reviewed. The Finance Action Team submits the budget for review.

All Executive Council members have the following responsibilities:

1. Promote communication and teamwork within the Executive Council, school, and community.
2. Supervise Action Teams.
3. Communicate the ideas and concerns of Peachtree Action Teams to the Council.
4. Inform Action Team members of Executive Council decisions.
5. Champion Peachtree's vision, mission, and charter.
6. Make recommendations to the principal concerning issues that affect a significant portion of the Peachtree community.
7. Review the principal's decisions on issues and the progress of the charter goals.
8. Meet monthly to review the PTCC operating budget and review the action items submitted by each action team.

The Executive Council will hold one meeting per month. The Chairperson may call additional meetings, as he/she deems necessary. Written notice of such meetings will be provided to faculty, staff, and parents/guardians. Detailed information on the duties and responsibilities of all executive council officers are outlined in the school's by-laws (please see attachments).

Election of Officers

The Chair of the Executive Council shall appoint a nominating committee consisting of both parent and faculty representatives to prepare a slate of prospective members for the following year no later than the April of the current term. The Chair may also call for additional nominations at that time. Details are provided in the Executive Council's by-laws (See Addendum).

Proceedings

- a. Proceeding of the Executive Council will be conducted to encourage the free exchange of ideas and the efficient consideration of business.
- b. Council proceedings will adhere to OCGA §50-14 (Open meetings) and OCGA §50-18 (Public Records).
- c. No official business may be conducted without a quorum. Discussion may take place, but no motions or resolutions may be voted upon without a quorum.
- d. A quorum is defined to consist of a minimum of four parent members (out of seven), three certified staff members (out of five), and the Principal or his/her designated Assistant Principal representative. Lack of minimum attendance by either of the three parties will result in there being no quorum.
- e. The Council will strive to reach consensus in all matters. If consensus cannot be achieved in a timeframe appropriate or in the presence of a perceived conflict of interest of any board member to the matter at hand, the matter will be tabled for future consideration, referred to an Action Team for consideration, or referred to the Administration for information. A simple majority of those members present under an established quorum is required to pass motions, except as noted in Robert's Rules of Order.
- f. Parents and Staff members are invited to attend and offer their views and comments at Executive Council meetings at any time. In order to maintain an agenda, however, any member or non-member who would like to present issues (which lie within Council jurisdiction) before the Council are asked to notify the Council Chairperson, by means of one week's advance notice, in writing or by e-mail. The Council Chairperson will either place the issue on the agenda for the next meeting or redirect the issue to the appropriate entity (Action Team).
- g. A calendar of regular meetings will be distributed to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year, and will be published in the school calendar, website, and email communications.
- h. Information will be distributed to parents on a regular basis. The Executive Council will notify the stakeholders of upcoming events and important information.
- i. All records of meetings including minutes, rosters, and recommendations will be available to staff and families for their review in the school office. Information will also be communicated through informal meetings, and scheduled informational meetings.

Conflicts of Interest

Future members: During the nominating process, prospective members will be vetted regarding potential conflicts of interest of the Executive Council member.

Current members: The Executive Council will seek to avoid conflicts of interest in all matters and manners, including but not limited to serving on committees where a member might have a financial interest, or directing the Executive Council to vote on policies that directly affect their child's grade or status in an extra-curricular activity. If any person believes a conflict of interest exists, that issue should be first raised to a member of the Council's Executive Board. If the person is not satisfied with the result, the conflict should be then raised with the principal, and the procedures set out in the grievance policy should be followed. No conflicts of interests exist among current members of the Executive Council.

If a perceived conflict of interest arises, the Executive Council will utilize the DeKalb County System Charter School Petitioner Conflict of Interest Form. While this is a Start Up Charter guideline, it will provide us with a timely resolution.

The Action Teams

Certified Staff MUST actively participate on an Action Team. Non-certified staff, parents and community members are encouraged to join an Action Team. Action Team members must be present for a minimum of one half of the meeting to be credited with having attended.

Parents and Staff members are encouraged to attend and offer their views and comments at Action Team meetings at any time. In order to maintain an agenda, however, any member or non-member who would like to present issues (which lie within Action Team jurisdiction) are asked to contact the Action Team Chairperson prior to the meeting. The Action Team Chairperson will either place the issue on the agenda for the next meeting or redirect the issue to the appropriate entity (Executive Council).

The members of each Action Team will plan meeting times that accommodate their schedules.

The following Action Teams will meet regularly as designated by the Executive Council, with additional meetings as necessary, to ensure that the Charter and school improvement plan are implemented.

Structure

Parent Teacher Charter Council Action Teams:

- Curriculum & Instruction
- Family and Community Relations
- Facilities & Equipment
- Finance
- School Climate
- School Activities

Other ad hoc teams as necessary

Curriculum and Instruction

- This team shall be responsible for curriculum and instructional issues. These may include, but are not limited to, reviewing, revising, and recommending new curricula, monitoring and evaluating the schedule, coordinating curriculum between Peachtree and the elementary and high schools, making recommendations about instructional materials and tracking student progress, and achievement by various means, including, but not limited to, those outlined in the school improvement plan, goals, and objectives. The Team shall seek creative and meaningful ways to identify student performance and

needs, both individually and collectively, and track improvement, both within the school year and from year to year. In addition the Curriculum and Instruction Action Team will:

- Seek out competitions and activities students can participate in for enrichment purposes
- Develop and seek out programs for cultural arts education.
- Participate with other Action Teams in fostering and recognizing student academic and cultural arts achievement.
- Survey and recommend on-going academic staff development training programs geared to identified staff and student needs, including monitoring faculty/staff morale.
- Organize and monitor the “Talk Teams” for teachers. The “Talk Teams” serve three purposes: 1. Allows for open discussion during grade level meetings on items to be addressed by the Executive Council and/or Action Teams, 2. Provides an opportunity for a teacher leader at each grade level, and 3. Provides a potential teacher representative from each grade level on the Executive Council.

The assistant principal of instruction shall serve on this Action Team.

Family and Community Relations

This team shall be responsible for recommending and supporting policies and programs concerning (but not limited to):

- Parental Agreements
- Hearing appeals with regard to not fulfilling the provisions of agreements
- Seeking business and community partnerships
- Communication
- Coordinate Office Volunteers
- Bulletin Board
- Calling Post Coordinator
- Clinic and Social Worker Liaison
- Clothing Closet Coordinator
- Directory
- Dunwoody Chamblee Parents Council
- Grade Level Coordinators
- Hospitality
- Newsletter creation and dissemination
- School Liaisons
- School Tours
- Parental Agreements
- Community Liaison/Dialogo Latino
- Partners in Education/Publicity
- Student Showcase
- eNews and Activity Lines

A guidance counselor shall serve on the Family and Community Relations Action Team and will make referrals, at his/her discretion, to this team. This team will create and maintain a wide variety of communication channels to ensure a free flow of information among the Council, Actions Teams, students, faculty and staff, families, and community. This team will also be responsible for involvement programs such as partnerships, public relations, and mentoring, which reach out to the entire Peachtree community via civic, corporate, youth, and volunteer groups. This team will facilitate positive relationships with our elementary feeder schools and Dunwoody High School to instill a sense of community across the grade levels.

Facilities and Equipment

This team will foster a positive learning environment through improvements to the building, grounds, and athletic and other equipment. This team will ensure that maintenance, upkeep and use of the facilities reflect the standards of excellence set forth in this Charter and the School Improvement Plan and expectations for use of the new building and grounds. The Facilities and Equipment Action Team will be responsible for reviewing requests by outside persons/agencies for use of the school facilities and grounds and making recommendations to the Executive Council for approval or denial of the facility use. Requests for facility use must be received a minimum of 60 days prior to a scheduled event. The Facilities and Equipment Action Team will also:

- Assess classroom technology and seek ways to enhance and optimize technology to support student achievement, family involvement, and the school improvement plan.
- Coordinate investigating technologies with the Curriculum and Instruction Team.
- Work in conjunction with the Family and Community Relations Action Team to recommend beautification/improvements to the physical plan of the new building and grounds.

Finance

This team shall be led by the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be selected by the executive council. The Treasurer may be either a certified staff or parent representative. The Treasurer shall:

- a. Make a report at each Board meeting
- b. Chair the finance action team
- c. Assist in the preparation of the budget
- d. Help develop fundraising plans
- e. Make financial information available to Board members and the public

The Finance Team shall be responsible for, but not limited to, determining and prioritizing financial needs and developing creative ways to fund and staff instructional programs and other needs. The team shall monitor the Parent Teacher Charter Council budget, and produce financial reports as required by the principal, Peachtree Executive Council, DeKalb County Board of Education, and State of Georgia. This team will also 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. The role of the finance action team is discussed further in the school's by-laws.

Some means of funding include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Book Fair
- Magazine Sale
- Membership
- Merchant Rebates
- Picture Day/Yearbook
- School Store
- Spirit Shirts

School Climate

This team will work with faculty, grade level administrators, and administrators responsible for discipline to ensure that Peachtree maintains the school climate to foster development of the whole student through academic achievement, cultural arts achievement, and physical achievement through sports and friendly competition. The Peachtree school climate will be maintained through the monitoring of the following:

- Attendance (absences and tardies)
- Adherence to the dress standard
- Character education
- Enforcing academic/behavioral agreements and related standards for students
- Honors Program
- Staff Development
- Conference Dinners
- Drug Awareness/Peer-Proofing
- Patriot Games
- Teacher Appreciation

This team will coordinate with the Family and Community Relations and Curriculum and Instruction Action Teams to promote students' work throughout the school and the community. They will coordinate open house events, press releases, portfolio night, and other similar events to promote academics within the school, and draw attention to personal and professional growth of staff members. This team shall survey the faculty and provide on-going staff development training programs geared to identified staff needs. These needs include monitoring faculty/staff morale.

School Activities

This team will coordinate students' extracurricular activities by recruiting parent volunteers and supporting teacher liaisons. Activities include:

- Academic Competition Team Support
- 8th Grade Dance
- Honors and Awards Programs
- Patriot Games
- Spring Dance
- Student Clubs and Sports
- Student Government Association
- Yearbook

Action Team Structure

The Action Team Chairperson is selected by the executive council and must be a member of the executive council and has the following responsibilities:

1. Set agendas for action team meetings.
2. Conducts Action Team meetings.
3. Facilitates communication and teamwork among members of the group and with other Action Teams.

The Principal or his designated representative shall serve as a member of each Action Team.

The Action Team Chairperson shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Acts as liaison to the Peachtree Executive Council.
2. Reports Action Team business on a monthly basis.
3. Communicates Peachtree Executive Council information and decisions to Action Team members.

In making their reports, Action Team Chairpersons are encouraged to include participation and reports by Action Team members. An Action Team member participating in a report does not require prior notification to be placed on the agenda.

Action Team members have the following responsibilities:

1. Actively seek input from Peachtree students, parents/guardians, faculty, staff, and community.
2. Provide creative and alternative solutions to issues.
3. Gather, prioritize, and assess information, then offer suggestions for implementation.
4. Carry out various activities, as mandated by the Executive Council.
5. Discuss related issues, as needed, at Executive Council meetings.
6. Provide minutes of the meeting to the Executive Council.

Action Team Subcommittees shall be created within each Action Team, as needed. These teams may have the following responsibilities:

1. Discuss and analyze issues and ideas relating to Peachtree's School Improvement Plan.
2. Research available literature, attend workshops, and visit other schools, which have innovative programs.
3. Provide feedback and make recommendations to the Executive Council.
4. Collect, organize, and evaluate information related to school-wide improvement.
5. Write grant proposals associated with the Charter school.
6. Support the principal, faculty, and staff in bringing about the Peachtree vision.
7. Foster thorough, effective, informal communication inside and outside the Peachtree community.
8. Ensure that an administrator approves formal communications between the Action Team, the home and the community.

Terms

In order to maintain consistency and productivity from year to year, it is suggested that the Action Team members shall serve a minimum of two years.

Staff and Faculty

- **Support Staff**--School support staff (paraprofessionals, custodians, secretaries, registrar, cafeteria staff, campus supervisor, etc.) should continue to be provided and funded subject to current federal, state, and local monies.
- **Payroll Services**--All Peachtree Charter Middle School employees shall remain (or will be) employees of DeKalb County School System. All payroll services shall continue to be provided by DeKalb County School System. No salaries or benefits shall be affected by the establishment of the Charter School.
- **School Resource Officer and Campus Supervisors**—The DeKalb County School System will continue to provide the funding for these positions as it does in all DeKalb County secondary schools.
- The DeKalb County Board of Education will continue to allocate personnel resources to Peachtree Charter Middle School under the system of allotment used for all DeKalb County schools.
- Administrative, faculty, and special and paraprofessional staff will remain employees of the DeKalb County Board of Education, with no alteration in salary, workers' compensation, insurance, health, retirement and other benefits due to the establishment of this Charter. See Appendix M DCSS Salary Schedule
- All personnel employed by DeKalb County will be fingerprinted.
- New hires will be eligible for benefits from the DeKalb County Board of Education under the same rules as other employees.
- All personnel employed by the DeKalb County School System will have a criminal record check prior to employment.
- The principal will have full authority over selection of and recommendation to hire all faculty and staff.
- All evaluation procedures and instruments for both certified and non-certified personnel shall be in conformance with OCGA §20-2-210 and instruments adopted by the State and/or the DeKalb County Board of Education. Appeal procedures against adverse personnel actions shall continue in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the DeKalb County Board of Education.
- Certification by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GAPSC) will be required in compliance with No Child Left Behind and “highly qualified” standards.
- Principal Evaluation—Principals performance evaluation will be conducted by the Superintendent’s designee. The Parent Teacher Charter Council Executive Council will provide the principal with an advisory evaluation.

Financial Policies and Procedures

- Finances—Peachtree shall operate according to the budget provided by DeKalb County consistent with DeKalb County per-pupil allocations assigned to non-charter schools.
- Tuition and Fees—Peachtree shall not charge tuition or fees to any student except as may be authorized for Local Boards by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-133. Reasonable fees may be charged for before- and after-school programs.

- Outside Funding—Peachtree may accept charitable donations on behalf of the Peachtree Charter School Foundation. Such charitable donations shall not change the financial obligations discussed in APPENDIX I.
- Purchase Agreement—The DeKalb County Board of Education and Peachtree may enter into a purchase agreement or agreements providing for the purchase by Peachtree from the DeKalb County Board of Education of certain goods, services and materials in connection with the operation of Peachtree.
- **County Funding** Peachtree Charter proposes that the DeKalb County Board of Education will continue to provide funding as per state law. Funding sources may include, but are not limited to:
 - Per-pupil local funding using the 1st 20-day count
 - Per-pupil instructional allowance
 - Federal dollars available throughout the system-wide Food Service
 - Department based on the number of free and reduced meals served
 - Technology funds for special status
 - School improvement plan funding
 - Staff Development
 - Special Instructional Assistance (SIA) Funds
 - Textbook/Title V, Part A funds
 - Title I funds, if applicable
 - Support Staff
 - Supplemented positions

Fiscal accountability will be maintained through the DeKalb County School System's finance department for any funding provided by the DeKalb Board of Education.

Peachtree 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:

1. An annual operating budget for the Parent Teacher Charter Council will be drawn up by the Finance Action Team, in support of the School Improvement Plan and the annual goals of the Charter and submitted to the Executive Council for review and approval.
2. When additional funding becomes available, the Finance Action Team will review the budget and goals and submit recommendations to the Executive Council as to the best use of the funding.
3. The Finance Action Team will solicit input from the community and staff and from the other Action Teams.
4. The Executive Council will assign the proposed expenditures to the appropriate Action Team with the approval of the principal.
5. The Peachtree Charter Middle School (PCMS) Foundation will be responsible for the actual disbursement of any funds received through grants.
6. Additional funds may be sought for instructional and facility/grounds improvements.

Revenue Proposals

Building Improvements: All vendors would have to meet specified approved DeKalb County School Board of Education safety, insurance and product specification guidelines.

Peachtree Charter Middle School (PCMS) Foundation

The PCMS Foundation is responsible for accepting tax-deductible donations and is governed by a separate board of directors.

History

During the 2007-2008 school year, Peachtree merged the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the Governance Council. Our newly-formed Parent Teacher Charter Council now functions as one, cohesive entity. The PCMS Foundation is an additional entity controlled by a separate board of directors. The Foundation promotes long-term educational enhancements and manages the PTCC operating budget (the expenses of this budget are decided by the PTCC Executive Council).

Examples of expenditures of the PTCC Operating Budget:

- Beautification
- Conference Dinners
- Cultural Arts
- Patriot Games
- Staff Appreciation
- Student Incentives
- Pride of Peachtree
- short-term, day-to-day operations of the PTCC

Examples of expenditures of the PCMS Foundation:

- Academic Teams (Academic Bowl, Science Olympiad, Math Team, Black History Bowl, Reading Bowl, Art Masters), includes teacher stipends and any team entry fees for the competitions
- class sets of novels
- teacher workshop/conference registration fees
- supplemental teaching materials by teacher request
- long-term, educational enhancements

The Foundation relies on the generosity of parents and community members throughout the school year. The Foundation raises money through straight donations and with special fundraising during the annual Student Showcase event in February.

Booster clubs (Band, Orchestra, Football, Cheerleading, etc.) are NOT included in either the PTCC Operating Budget or the PCMS Foundation.

Donations to either the PCMS Foundation and/or PTCC Operating Budget/General Fund are tax-deductible.

Grants

As a Charter school, Peachtree recognizes that there will be additional funds and grant opportunities available. Through the Peachtree Charter Middle School Foundation, Peachtree intends to apply for and obtain funds, which will be used for such items including, but not limited to, additional instructional materials, technology, media, and facility improvements.

Duration of the Charter

This Charter shall commence on July 1, 2010 and shall expire at midnight, June 30, 2015, unless terminated pursuant to the terms hereof.

Acknowledgements

- SACS Accreditation--Peachtree Charter Middle School (PCMS) shall maintain accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).
- PCMS shall provide all appropriate services in compliance with any federal or state laws or regulations relating to disabilities, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA).
- PCMS shall be subject to all reporting requirements of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320
- PCMS shall be subject to provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1050 requiring a brief period of quiet reflection
- PCMS shall be subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq. (Open and Public Meetings) and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq. (Inspection of Public Records).
- ELL Program--This program will continue to serve ELL students as currently provided by DeKalb County under existing federal guidelines.
- Gifted Education--the Impact Program will continue to serve Peachtree according to State Guidelines. Students will continue to be assessed for eligibility for this program. Peachtree will serve the students two to five periods a day in a content-based program by a certified teacher of the gifted.
- Facility--Peachtree's facility is a public school owned and maintained by DeKalb County. Built in 2007, the building is located at 4664 North Peachtree Road in Dunwoody, Georgia.
- Accountability: Peachtree will not waive the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-14-30 through O.C.G.A. § 20-14-41. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2063 and Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9-.04. Peachtree will work with DeKalb County School System to participate in all state-mandated assessment.
- Insurance and Indemnification: Peachtree remains a public school within DeKalb County, and continues to be bonded and insured as any other DeKalb County School.
- Compliance with Laws and Regulations: Peachtree shall comply with 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. Furthermore, Peachtree shall be subject to all laws relating to unlawful conduct in or near a public school; the provisions of Part 3 of Article 2 of Charter 14 of this title; and all reporting requirement of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320.
- Amendments: This Charter may be amended upon the approval of the DeKalb County Board of Education, the State Board of Education, and a majority of the stakeholders of Peachtree and upon fulfilling any other obligation as set forth in Charter Schools Act of 1998.
- Peachtree will comply with the federal monitoring requirements for schools receiving federal funds.
- Existing food service and custodial programs will continue in accordance with Federal, State, and DCSS guidelines. Qualified students will continue to be eligible for the free or reduced price meal program.

- School Safety Plan: Peachtree will comply with O.C.G.A. 20-2-1185 and submit and obtain approval of the plan from the Georgia Department of Emergency Management.
- Peachtree will utilize Response to Intervention (Rtl) in aiding students with special needs. Peachtree will use Rtl to address students with special needs and to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2004.
- Peachtree will continue to receive extracurricular supplements provided by DeKalb County Schools.

State Waivers:

Specific exemptions requested from the Georgia Department of Education include:

1. Peachtree will determine the number of hours in each academic subject necessary for students to reach their objectives. (SBOE Rule IDEA 160-4-2-.05 MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM CRITERIA)

This waiver is necessary to improve student academic achievement in specific content areas as identified through state and federal approved testing instruments. This waiver allows for additional instruction in reading and math to be delivered to students who are below grade level and need additional assistance. It also allows the teachers to determine what the needs of all their students are and to meet these needs appropriately. Peachtree will see an annual two (2) percentage point improvement in the number of students at or above grade level on the CRCT in reading and math during the charter period. This waiver does not undermine the intent of SBOE Rule IDEA 160-4-2-.05 MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM CRITERIA because the intent is to insure that students receive an adequate amount of instruction in core subjects. Because students will not be successful without good reading and math skills, this waiver is consistent with the intent of the waived rule.

2. Peachtree requests an exemption to the A+ Education Reform Act of 2000 on the creation of School Councils. The A+ Education Reform Act of 2000 requires the creation of a specific type of school council. Peachtree already has a school council as dictated by the school's charter. Peachtree's Executive Council will have all the rights and responsibilities of a School Council as established per this Act. (HB 1187)

Per HB1187, School Councils were designed to "bring communities and schools closer together in the spirit of cooperation to solve difficult education problems, improve academic achievement, provide support for teachers and administrators, and bring parents into the school-based decision-making process." The intent of our waiver is to allow Peachtree to continue with its current working model, which is an expanded version of HB1187. Our Executive Council consists of a thirteen-member board, seven of whom are parent representatives. In comparison, the HB1187 Parent Council requires only a seven-member board with only two parent representatives. The waiver will allow Peachtree to continue to promote parental and community involvement. Serving on Peachtree's Executive Council is an additional avenue for involvement.

3. Peachtree requests an exemption to Regulation of Certified Professional Personnel: Use of personnel will be determined by the school administrators: principal and area superintendent. (160-5-1-.22(15)(B) "Personnel employed with responsibilities in areas for which the Professional Standards Commission issues a certificate shall possess the appropriate valid certificate and meet the in-field requirements of certification rules."

This waiver is necessary to improve student academic achievement. For example, Physical Education teachers may be needed to assist with technology instruction. This waiver also allows more flexible service delivery to students during reading and math instruction. For example, every student will have a 5th period Reading Class, requiring every academic teacher in the building to work with students on reading, regardless of certification specialty. (Only 7th and 8th grade students who exceed a benchmark reading level will be able to opt out for a World Language class.)

This waiver does not undermine the intent of 160-5-1-.22(15)(B) because any certificate personnel who is working outside their traditional area will have proper training for the task they are assigned. The intent of this rule is to ensure that qualified personnel teach students. Peachtree's teachers are all certified teachers in the state of Georgia.

4. Peachtree Charter Middle School reserves the right to purchase textbooks and other instructional materials not on the approved textbook list with funds previously allocated for textbooks without seeking additional funding from DCSS. These materials will be aligned with GPS and national guidelines. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-10-10)

This waiver will allow more flexibility in the selection of textbooks and instructional materials if it is necessary to provide further resources than those provided by the Georgia Department of Education and/or DeKalb County Schools. This waiver does not undermine, and is consistent with the intent of O. C. G.A. 20-2-10-10 because textbooks and other materials will be aligned with GPS and national guidelines.

5. Peachtree Charter Middle School requests a waiver from Class Size for Gifted and ELL – State Board Rule 160-6-1-.08 which will allow us to continue to capture FET funding for gifted and ELL students if we exceed maximum class size.

This waiver will allow more flexibility in populating classes for all academic levels without changing class designations such as ELL or gifted.

County Waivers:

Specific exemptions requested from the DeKalb County Board of Education will include:

1. All students and their parents/guardians are informed of, and must agree to, the Peachtree attendance policy at the time of enrollment. Parents/guardians should be aware that non-compliance with attendance policies may result in retention in the current grade and/or voluntary transfer to another DeKalb County school. (SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.10 JBD)

There is a direct correlation between school attendance and standardized test scores. (A recent report by the Georgia Office of Educational Accountability confirms this.) This waiver is necessary to ensure that Peachtree reaches its goal of improving student achievement in reading and math. If children come to school, they are more likely to be successful. Peachtree will see an annual two (2) percentage point improvement in the number of students at or above grade level on the CRCT in reading and math during the charter period. The intent of SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.10 JBD is to mandate regular student attendance and spell out permitted excuses for student absences. Peachtree is consistent with the intent of this rule, because excused absences are still permitted. Peachtree simply caps the number of unexcused absences permitted. For specific details, see APPENDIX E for the attendance policy.

2. Peachtree recognizes that having easily recognizable dress standards with no waivers minimizes the time teachers and staff spend defining appropriate clothing to students.

Consistent with our School Climate plan, our dress standard is designed to minimize clothing that is distracting to other students and teachers or could encourage disruptive or unsafe behavior. Our current dress standard, APPENDIX K, defines a modest standard of dress for both females and males while allowing for some individual choices in colors and styles. Reference: APPENDIX D.

3. Peachtree will determine the curriculum pacing, grading policies, benchmark tests and the requirements of any non-negotiable expectations. The Georgia Performance Standards is the guiding curriculum force. The teachers will collectively yet consistently develop appropriate pacing, grading, and benchmark testing that best meets the needs of our students. Peachtree waives any current or future pacing, grading, benchmark testing, and non-negotiable policies or directives.
4. Peachtree Charter Middle School requests a waiver to have increased site flexibility with staff contractual hours including but not limited to: conferences, Saturday academic remedial/enhancement programs for students, inclement weather make-up days, workdays or other times when students are not on campus under the direct supervision of staff, and evening community programs such as Student Showcase or multicultural events.

The continued success of our charter depends on extensive and intensive staff development and their participation in student learning outside of traditional school hours. For this reason, Peachtree needs the flexibility of scheduling staff time to meet the specific needs of our students.

5. Peachtree Charter Middle School will require teachers to commit to the tenets of the Charter, including their participation in Action Teams.

The Parent Teacher Charter Council balances parent and teacher participation so that all have a voice and active role in the success of the school and the students' welfare. This waiver is necessary to ensure that teachers who choose to join Peachtree Charter Middle School do so in full support of the Charter agreement.

6. Peachtree's principal will have autonomous authority to utilize FTE funds to meet the needs of our students at no additional cost to the County school system.
7. The Executive Council of the Parent Teacher Charter Council will meet candidates and provide input to the DeKalb County School System human resources department into the selection of the principal if that position is ever open during the period of the Charter.

The leadership role of principal at Peachtree Charter Middle School is integral to the implementation and vitality of the Charter. Including the Executive Council (as the governing board of the Charter) in the search ensures the ongoing integrity of the Charter.

8. Peachtree's principal will have autonomous authority to assign community volunteers to assist in educational and extracurricular programs to serve the needs of the students.

Highly qualified but non-certified community volunteers are available to help students with identified needs such as math tutoring, vocational training, language translation, and reading support as well as student-requested programs including Chess Club and Robotics. The principal needs the flexibility of utilizing outside resources as sponsors and volunteers to deliver these programs when staffing and budget are limited and without requiring staff supervision. All volunteers will be screened according to DeKalb County Schools policies.