

Hart County Charter System

Executive Summary

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Description of System

We are #oneheartbeat! Over the past five years, Hart County Charter System and the Hart County community have worked together to ensure that we are all focused on making Hart County the best in all areas and place people want to live and grow. It is our vision, to be recognized for educational excellence. In order to accomplish that vision we understand the need to make sure all of Hart County is part of our school system as we prepare our students for the challenges of tomorrow.

Hart County, established in 1920, is located in northeast Georgia, 50 miles northwest of Athens. Hart County was named for Nancy Hart, the Georgian responsible for capturing British soldiers by acting as a spy. Hart County is the only one of the 159 counties in Georgia to be named after a woman. Today, Hart County is home to more than 25,000 citizens. The eastern side of Hart County is occupied by Lake Hartwell that divides the state of Georgia and South Carolina. The Savannah River starts at Lake Hartwell and travels down the eastern side of the state of Georgia to Savannah.

In 2018 the median income for a household in the county was \$41,358. The per capita income for the county was \$22,361 and 13.6% of people were below poverty level. Data indicated that 15.1% of the population 25 and older held a bachelor's degree or higher. The unemployment rate is 3.5%. Approximately 16% of adults in Hartwell hold Bachelor's or advanced degree.

Agriculture is one of the leading industries for Hartwell and is in the top five in the state of Georgia based on per capita sales. Over the past ten years, manufacturing has increased after it nearly went away in the early 2000s. Nestle Purina and multiple German industries have established manufacturing in Hartwell over the past 5 years due to Hart County's access to Interstate 85 as well as the availability of a trainable workforce in the area thanks to the recently established college and career education in Hart County and Athens Technical College.

Located in Hartwell, Georgia, Hart County Charter System (HCCS) serves the residences of the city of Hartwell and county of Hart. The system consists of one high school, one middle school,

and three elementary schools. Hart County Charter System is the largest employer within the county with over 515 staff members and serves approximately 3,500 students. The system demographics are 62 % white, 22% Black, 8% Hispanic, 5% Multiracial, and 1% Asian. Students offered free and reduced meals is 62%.

All schools in the HCCS face unique challenges brought about by poverty and geographic location. Many of the students who are enrolled are members of economically disadvantaged families. There are many programs in place to combat the issue of student poverty. These programs range from the mentor program to providing access to extra tutoring and technology. Also, students may live as far as 15 miles away and transportation to events other than the regular school day can be difficult. Finding ways to incorporate tutoring, parent conferences, extra-curricular activities and other events that normally take place after the school day can be a challenge. Lastly, the universal issue of reduced parental involvement as our student's progress from elementary to middle to high school is amplified due to our unique challenges. We schedule meetings in the evenings and some afternoons and invite all parents. We send letters home, utilize the local newspaper, school website, Remind text messaging, and the Blackboard Connect automated call out system to notify and encourage parents to attend. We continue to make adjustments to our methods and means of communication to do our best to reach out to all of our families.

Purpose

System's Mission, Vision and Purpose

As a Charter System designated by the state of Georgia, Hart County Charter System is tasked with ensuring student success exceeds the norm. In order to accomplish that task, we have worked with our stakeholders over the past five years to identify three charter goal areas that guide everything we do. The three charter goals areas of high expectations, literacy, and college and career preparation are embedded in our system's strategic plan and guide and prioritize our academic and operational goals, as well as the allocation of resources. Stakeholders in our

community, from students and teachers to parents and business owners, are meaningfully engaged in the development of the strategic plan based on our charter goals. Each year stakeholders take part in activities to ensure the needs of our students are met.

Mission: The mission of the Hart County Charter System is to prepare all individuals to meet tomorrow's challenges by providing quality educational opportunities today.

Vision: Hart County Schools will be recognized for educational excellence.

Guiding Principles/Beliefs:

- Schools provide safe, secure, and nurturing environments for all.
- Stakeholders promote a positive atmosphere that fosters confidence and self-worth for all.
- Each individual is valued and treated with respect.
- Each individual has the right to be educated and the responsibility to learn.
- Quality education requires partnership, which is the responsibility of the school system, the students, the parents, and the community.

The mission of the Hart County Charter System requires all stakeholders to focus on the diverse student population with programs to meet their needs. Hart County offers numerous special programs including: gifted education, English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), special education, and remedial education.

With the help of an effective leadership and community cooperation, we prepare all students, all individuals to meet tomorrow's challenges by providing quality educational opportunities today. Hart County will be recognized for educational excellence. To help meet our mission and vision, we provide our students with a schools that are safe, secure, and has a nurturing environments for all. In Hart County our ultimate goal is for all students to: Finish what you start!!

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Administration

Since our last accreditation in 2015, Hart County Charter System has had consistent leadership at the system and school level which has allowed the system to focus its resources on continuous improvement in all areas of our strategic plan and develop our system charter status to meet the needs of our system. Our superintendent, Mr. Jaybez Floyd was born and raised in Hart County and since coming back to Hart County in 2015 has had a huge impact on the success of the school system due to his relationship and passion for the community. As a result, community support for the system is at an all-time high based on the passing of an Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (ESPLOST) that was passed by a large percentage in 2018 as well as sponsor support for our career academy and other academic endeavors. Additionally, our Board of Education have all been elected to 2nd and 3rd terms which has allowed them to work together effectively to achieve Georgia School Board's Exemplary Board in 2019. Finally, all of our current principals have been at their current schools for multiple years and as a result have been able to implement system and school based strategic plans based on the needs of the system as well as each school.

With our consistent leadership team over the past few years we have been able to focus on specific areas of need as a system. We started this process five years ago after when our superintendent arrived and we completed our AdvancED accreditation review. During that review a few opportunities for improvement were provided by the team that fit with the vision of our school system.

- Develop and implement a comprehensive systems approach to continuous improvement, including the development of systematic and systemic processes to increase two-way communication with all stakeholder groups and promote meaningful input into continuous improvement process. Incorporating the use of student data in a formalized manner, to increase student success, will be an integral part of this endeavor. Continue to review and

revise the current instructional framework to ensure it is effective increasing student performance.

- Design, implement and evaluate a district wide structure to provide opportunities and processes for the support of new staff and the facilitation of effective instructional strategies for all staff.
- Identify and deploy a process which will provide for a significant increase in stakeholder involvement in the continuous improvement process at both the school and district level.
- Articulate a balanced assessment process that assists teachers in understanding how to use diagnostic, formative, and summative data to differentiate instruction. Structure the assessment system to yield timely and accurate formative information that is meaningful and useful for developing differentiated instructions and implementing a variety of interventions.

As a system, we have focused heavily on the idea that we are a school system and all students should have the same high expectations for their future. Mr. Floyd states continuously that in order to be successful, we must be rich in tradition and provide a reason for students to want to be at school. To accomplish those goals and meet our needs we have implemented multiple initiatives to ensure that we are working as #OneHartBeat to ensure the success of all students.

Major initiatives implemented over the past 5 years to provide tradition and success for all students.

- Reviewed, revised, and renewed our state system charter status so we could streamline our school improvement, strategic planning and charter expectations to provide a clear picture of who we are and what we expect.
- Worked with Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) to build leaders and to identify root causes for student performance based on longitudinal data to develop a plan of action in identified areas of need.
- Hired six academic coaches that have brought continuity to our curriculum, assessment, and instructional practices.

- Hired a data analyst/assessment coordinator who is focused on providing up to date information to our schools.
- Hired a community relations director and created a social media campaign focused on demonstrating to all of Hart County that we are #onehartbeat and that as a community we are working together for the future of Hart County.

State Charter System

Hart County has had state charter system status since 2014-2015 school year as part of the state of Georgia's requirement for school system to choose an educational system. As a state charter system, Hart County operates under the terms of a charter contract between the State Board of Education and the local Board of Education. The system receives flexibility in the form of waivers of certain state laws, rules and guidelines in exchange for greater accountability for increased student performance and an emphasis on school-based leadership and decision making. Over the past few years we began reviewing and updating our charter to ensure that we were streamlining our process for school improvement and strategic planning so that there was not any confusion in who we are and what we are doing to ensure our system charter to reflects our system's strategic plan and mission and vision. As a result, our system charter is now embedded into our strategic plan in the areas of College and Career Preparation, Literacy, and High Expectations. As we continue our growth as a system, each charter goal area will continue to be prominent in our strategic plan and be the focus of our system.

College and Career Expectations

The mission of the Hart County Charter System is to prepare all individuals to meet tomorrow's challenges by providing quality educational opportunities today. Under our charter, our college and career has the expectation to prepare our students for the future as well as provide a future work force for Hart County. Currently 54% of all the labor force in Hart County leaves county lines to go to work each day. In addition we are in large need of industrial workers and welders in Hart County. In order to retain the work force in Hart County and develop industrial workers, we have to start early to prepare our students for their future. From Positive Behavior

Instructional Supports (PBIS) and 7 Mindsets character education program being modeled at all schools to provide expectations for students in all situations to college and career exposure at all schools, our ultimate goal is to prepare all students for their future. Over the past few years we have been intentional in our instruction and programs as it relates to college and career preparations. We have realigned our STEAM initiative to focus on project-based learning so that it meshes traditional learning with critical thinking and problem solving. In addition, as students matriculate through our system they are provided increased exposure to what is available in our College and Career Academy.

We have developed a process that by the end of eighth grade all students are provided guidance into a career pathway that might of interest to them as well as exposed to opportunities in our community through job and health fairs that reflect that interest. We have also implemented a practice for all 8th and 10th grade students to take the YouScience assessment. This provides a portfolio for students that gives them eye opening data that outlines their interest and possible jobs for them in the future. This sparks meaningful conversations between our students and their counselors at the middle and high school levels that helps us strategically adjust student's schedules to fit their interests as students in terms of academic and pathway placement. We have seen that these conversations supported by data have really started to make our students think about what they want to do with their future. The portfolio report created by the YouScience assessment also lists colleges, universities, and technical schools that support each job field.

Our WBL (Work Based Learning) program has been reconstructed as well. As a result of that process, over the past 4 years we have gone from 12 students who were placed in work based experiences in their career of choice to over forty. Students are being placed in local industries which line up with their pathway interest and possible future job placements. We currently have several former graduates who are attaining mechatronics and automotive engineering degrees at no cost to them, completely paid by the industry.

Overall our college and career academy is still in the early stages but we continue to adjust our focus to ensure that our student/parent awareness to future college and career choices so that students see a purpose for their learning. We like to think of it as a six-year plan that begins in

the 8th grade and takes them through their first year after graduation. Our main goal is to prepare all students for tomorrow's future. Some will go to college, others will attend technical school, and many will enter the workforce, but everyone should have a plan for the Saturday after graduation. The first day of the rest of their life!

Literacy

In 2017 we started our work with Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) to identify specific root causes across the system for all students. Throughout that work we have sent multiple teams of teachers, administrators, and coaches from all schools to identify, create, and implement specific plans based on those findings. As a result, over the past three years we have implemented multiple literacy-based initiatives as well as Tier 1 instructional programs that are focused on being intentional about fostering a culture of reading and writing rather than in producing student test-takers as well as focusing on instructional strategies that help students be successful.

We continue to look at our data and measure it against our goals at each school and at the district level. All schools continue to have areas for growth, so consistent implementation of the system's strategic plan and innovative practices as it relates to literacy and instruction will continue to be the focus of system.

High Expectations

Our vision of being recognized for education excellence throughout the state starts with our expectations for students, teachers, and the community. In everything that we do as a system we must demand the best. As a system we are always looking to get better. In order to do so we have implemented mentoring programs for new teachers that are designed and implemented by veteran teachers, we have sent teachers to Pioneer RESA for training in various aspects of school system operations such as leadership, PBIS and academic coaching, and we continue to look for more ideas to support opportunities to develop teacher leaders. In addition to supporting our teachers, we provide multiple opportunities for our school governance teams to provide

leadership in our schools to demonstrate the expectation that our schools are operated on school based leadership and guidance.

School Governance Teams

Local Schools Governance (LSGT) are a major component of Hart County Charter System. Each school governance team is made up of community members, parents, staff and students at the high school. Members serve specific terms and are elected and or appointed based on by-laws re-established each school year. All LSGT teams have monthly meetings that are led by a chairman who is a community or parent member. The principal at each school provides guidance much like our superintendent does with the school board. Our Career Academy has a board of Directors that acts as and LSGT and has community members from all major industries in Hart County.

Our LSGT teams have become more involved in the many decisions that impact our students. Each LSGT has stated that having a better understanding of student achievement, decision making procedures, schools operations, and curriculum and instruction have been very beneficial and have had an impact on how they view the school and the system. Some of the main successes of the LSGT have been an increase in communication between schools and stakeholders on the understanding of the system's strategic plan development, input and approval of school level budgets and school improvement plans, input on the system's yearly calendar, pathway creation, and graduation requirements.

Current Growth Opportunities

As with all school systems, we continue to look for innovative ways to support all student learning. Whether it is by increasing the amount of project-based learning to support critical thinking or utilizing data to ensure we are adjusting instruction based on the needs of each student we are constantly looking for ways to support all students. Currently, we are in the process of revising and updating our response to intervention program (RTI) to meet the new state guidelines for Multi-Tiers Systems of Support (MTSS). The goal of this program is to

provide a more data driven approach to student support to ensure we have the right students and student supports identified. We have hired a director for that program as well as our PBIS program to ensure that we have a plan for all students both academically and emotionally.

In addition, to the implementation of MTSS we have now moved into the world of virtual learning due to the current COVID pandemic. As a result, we have had to reassign teachers, provide professional learning on demand for teachers, and also increase our technology infrastructure. Luckily, we have been very proactive the past few years with our technology and technology training embedded into our instructional framework that this has been a fairly easy transition.

Another area we continue to work with is continuing to increase our two-communication with parents and the community. The amount of information sent home and available is significant, however we still are looking for ways to gather more input from our stakeholders as it comes to our current and long-range planning.

Additional Information about Hart County Charter System

System Strategic Plan and Improvement Process

Hart County Charter System has an on-going strategic planning and school improvement process that mirrors the state of Georgia's Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) as it relates to Federal Programs. This ensures that all stakeholders have an opportunity to participate in our continuous improvement process. The CNA includes the areas of Effective Leadership, Coherent Instruction, Professional Capacity, Supportive Learning Environment, and Family and Community Engagement. Each of those areas are part of our system's strategic plan to ensure we have data that helps us to create a goal and an action step for each area. We complete the CNA each year based on the prior year's data and make changes based on our findings. To support the information for our CNA, each school's strategic plan is updated each spring and finalized each fall based on multiple review points throughout the year. Review points such as quarterly District Support of Strategic Plan (DSSP) meetings, parent surveys, budget reviews,

yearly board retreat, and system leadership meetings require schools and the system to focus their efforts and discussions on their strategic plans and how it is being implemented. From each of those meetings, the system utilizes the information to update and revise the system's strategic plan as well as school plans to ensure progress is being made.

Georgia College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI)

The Georgia College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) is the accountability system that measures schools and school districts on a 100-point scale. Over the past five years, we have shown improvement at all levels of the state's accountability system. While the scores have room for improvement, based on the upward trend at all levels we feel we are on the right track. Hart County has utilized the data from our state and local assessments to focus on specific areas of need. Our leadership has gone through extensive training with the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) to do a deeper dive into our data to better understand who we are as a system and what we need to improve on to help our students.

The work with GLISI has helped us to establish a focus in the area of Tier 1 instruction as well as Literacy throughout the school system. This is reflective in our implementation of a system wide instructional model, professional learning based on teacher needs, and in the use of data to provide instructional strategies focused on each student's needs.

More data for our system can be found at <https://www.hart.k12.ga.us/domain/1468>

	2012 Score	2013 Score	2014 Score	2015 Score	2016 Score	2017 Score	2018 Score	2019 Score
State								
Elementary	74.9	78.5	73.5	76.8	72.8	73.9	77.8	77.1
All Hart Elementary	72.4	72.2	74.3	74.9	73	77	73.2	77.8
Hartwell	75.8	67	82.9	87.2	80.6	82.5	73.6	72.3
North Hart	74	79.8	83.6	68.2	75.6	80.4	73.9	79.1
South Hart	65.3	71.5	64.9	72.8	72.5	71.4	73.0	79.6

	2012 Score	2013 Score	2014 Score	2015 Score	2016 Score	2017 Score	2018 Score	2019 Score
State Middle	73.9	75	74.1	71.7	72.1	73.8	76.18	72.1
Middle School	83.3	90.7	75.8	63.4	62.6	68.1	74.2	72.8

	2012 Score	2013 Score	2014 Score	2015 Score	2016 Score	2017 Score	2018 Score	2019 Score
State High	73	72	68.7	76.1	76.1	77.6	75.27	77.00
High School	61.1	58.8	71.9	75.5	68.2	70.5	70.4	74.0

	2012 Score	2013 Score	2014 Score	2015 Score	2016 Score	2017 Score	2018 Score	2019 Score
State System Score	74.1	75.8	72.3	75.5	73.6	75	76.42	75.90
Hart System Score	71.9	72.2	74.4	73.1	69.8	73.7	72.7	75.5

*no data from 2020 due to COVID Pandemic

Hart County Charter System strives to be #onehartbeat. It is our goal and our vision that we will be recognized for academic excellence. In order to do so, we will continue to review our system goals, objectives, initiatives and action steps to ensure we are meeting the needs of all students. While we realize there will always be obstacles on what we face, if we work together as #onehartbeat we will meet our mission of preparing all students for the challenges of tomorrow.