

Charter System and Cluster Planning Update

May 4, 2015

Board Work Session



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THE CASE

1) *What challenges is your school district facing?*

Provide a brief description of the specific issues that, if resolved, would allow you to consider your school district a complete success.

Atlanta Public Schools

An Introduction to the System & its Challenges

District Facts

106
Learning Sites
& Programs

Elementary Schools <i>(Non-Charter)</i>		Alternative/ Nontraditional Programs	4
Primary Campuses	5		
K-5 & Intermediate Campuses	47	Evening School/ Adult Education Programs	2
		Charter Schools	17
Middle Schools <i>(Non-Charter)</i>	12*		
High Schools <i>(Non-Charter)</i>	18*		
Open Campus	1		

* Includes two single-gender campuses



Student Facts



2014 Graduates
1,905

Academic and Athletic
Scholarships Offered to
Class of 2014

\$100 Million

Teachers
3,813

Charter: 628
Non-Charter: 3,185



50,253

Projected K-12
Student Enrollment

Charter: 7,421 students
Non-Charter: 42,832 students

Students' Ethnic Distribution

African-American	76.2%
Caucasian	14.3%
Hispanic	6.7%
Multiracial	1.6%
Asian/American Indian/ Alaskan/Other	1.2%

Computer/Student Ratio

1:2



91 Title I
Schools

Transportation

Number of Buses	402
Miles Traveled Daily	25,000
Students Transported Daily	22,000



FY15 Operating Budget **\$657.5** Million

Students Eligible for Free and
Reduced-Priced Meals **77.32%**

Atlanta Public Schools

An Introduction to the System & its Challenges

Fall 2014 – Spring 2015

- Georgia law required that every school system in Georgia had to decide by June 2015 whether it will become an IE2 (Investing in Excellence in Education) system, a charter system, or issue a public acknowledgment of satisfaction with the current status of operation under the rules, processes, and practices of the Georgia Department of Education (a status quo system).
- In the Fall, after exploring the merits of all three (3) operating models, the Atlanta Board of Education determined that the Charter System model would be the best fit for Atlanta Public Schools.
- APS community assisted in developing the application by providing input on waivers needed, the governance structure, and the desired areas of focus for Atlanta Public Schools
- To date, over 1,500 community and district staff have participated in the planning process

Atlanta Public Schools

An Introduction to the System & its Challenges

Reasons for Atlanta Public Schools to Become a Charter System:

- Greater flexibility in serving students
- Greater community and parent involvement with decision making
- Greater flexibility in using state and local resources
- Innovative solutions for meeting the diverse needs of APS's student population
- Greater accountability by the school system to the community

Atlanta Public Schools

An Introduction to the System & its Challenges

**Academic
Program**

**Talent
Management**

**Systems &
Resources**

Culture

The Guiding Principles

APS will use the four E's as its litmus test to gauge worthiness of proposed solutions.



Academic Program: All students are not on a predictive path to college and career readiness.

APS scores below the state average in all subjects on state testing (CRCT grades 3-8).

APS is 10.5 points lower than the state average for CCRPI data.

The 2013 APS Graduation Rate was 59%, significantly lower than the state average (72%).

A significant achievement gap exists between schools and student subgroups.

While APS has improved each year for the last three years, growth is uneven between school sites and student populations.

How Charter System Can Help

The uneven growth across subjects, schools, and student subgroups indicates that APS's current academic programming is only benefitting certain populations and needs to be strengthened and customized to the specific needs of students and school sites.

The Charter System model facilitates school-site customization.

Talent Management:

The talent management systems need to be revised to recruit, retain, and develop the talent needed (across all levels of the organization) to achieve the mission.

Hiring systems need to be revised to better support the efficient tracking, vetting, and selection of candidates.

HR and C&I need to collaborate and ensure consistent use of professional development tools and alignment of PD opportunities to effectively grow teachers or leaders.

Targeted staffing strategies must be implemented to ensure that students with the most needs do not spend the majority of their time with the most inexperienced teachers.

The APS compensation strategy must be revised to ensure consistency among educators with similar experience levels.

Principals need more flexibility in the hiring process and utilization of their resource allocations.

How Charter System Can Help

While APS has already taken action to update and improve the talent acquisition systems and processes, there is extensive work left to be done to ensure that talent is managed appropriately, placed where it is most needed, and retained through appropriate compensation and professional development.

The Charter System model allows schools greater flexibility to customize talent acquisition, development, and management to meet their specific needs.

Systems and Resources:

Current systems are not driving achievement of the academic vision.

Systems for budgeting, IT, HR, Data do not support cross departmental collaboration and communication.

Inefficiencies at the district level affect the school-site ability to address needs of students in real time.

Schools receive minimal freedom in budgeting due to extensive district and state constraints on use of funds.

Inefficiencies at the district level consume the district's scarce resources.

How Charter System Can Help

APS is already in the process of updating its systems to ensure that its limited resources are allocated and spent in the most effective ways to increase student achievement.

Charter System status allows even more flexibility with the use of funds, both at the district and school site levels, to ensure that student needs are met and systems are highly functioning and supportive of the district's mission.

Culture:

The district does not have the trust or engagement of stakeholders necessary to achieve the mission.

APS has experienced significant rifts in its integrity and buy-in from its communities and stakeholders.

PTAs* and Local School Advisory Councils are unevenly organized and implemented across the district.

Students report the need to feel safer and respected at their schools.

Suspensions and poor attendance are significantly higher for students of color and low income.

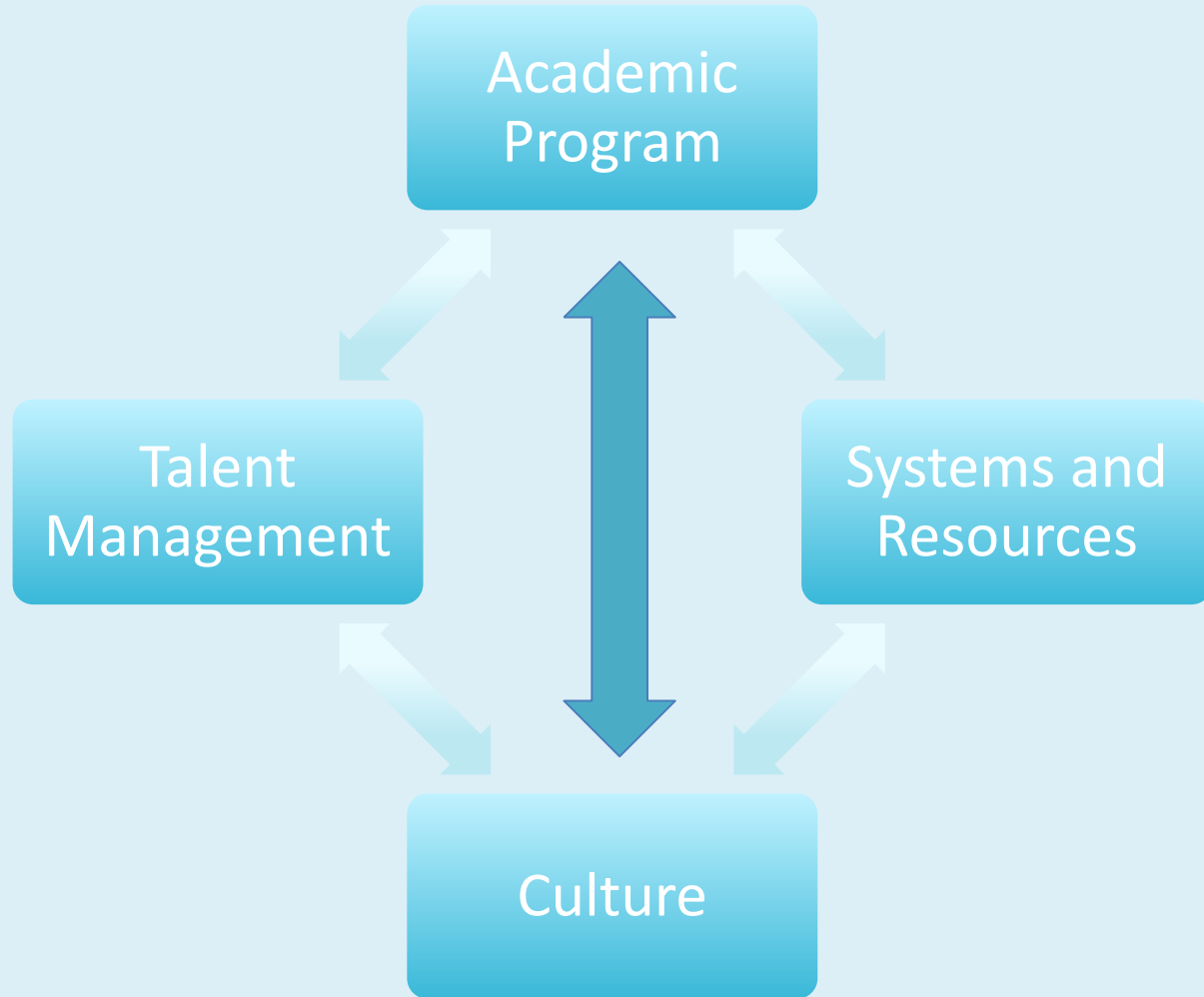
*Though PTAs are voluntary organizations operated outside of the district, their numbers are a great indication of the overall lack of parent engagement.

How Charter System Can Help

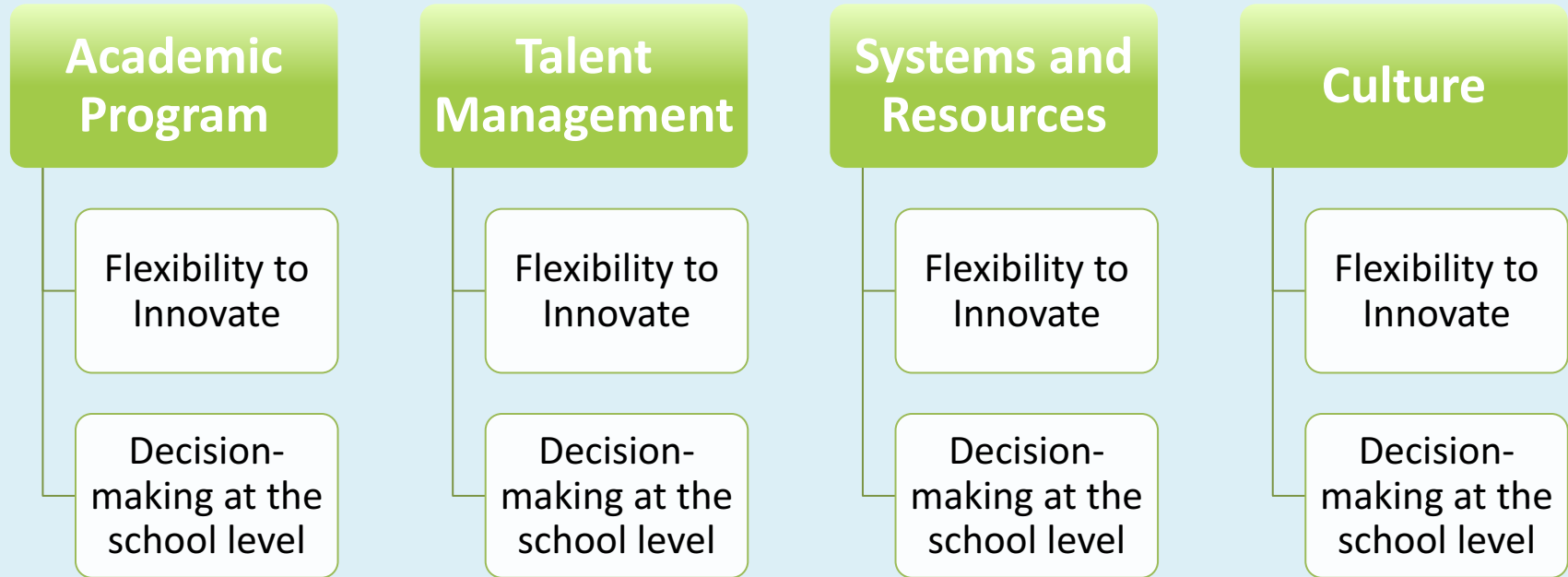
APS has already begun to rebuild trust with its stakeholders by engaging the community and providing a meaningful platform to contribute to the future of APS through its district strategic planning, cluster visioning, and work towards charter system status.

Charter System status will solidify the community's involvement in APS and its schools through the organization of Local School Governance Teams with real autonomy and input into decisions made for the school and the district.

What is the rank order priority of these challenges (from most to least important)?



Which of these challenges will your school district be able to address by becoming a charter system?



Every single one of APS’s challenges can benefit through the two main concepts of the charter system—the ability of schools to be responsive to their students’ needs through increased flexibility.

FLEXIBILITY-DRIVEN INNOVATION

How will APS use its broad flexibility waiver to drive innovative solutions at both the school and district level?

Academic Program

School Level Strategies

APS believes that the ability to customize academic programming at the individual school and cluster levels is essential to meeting the diverse needs of APS's student populations. Below are potential school-based solutions requiring flexibility that LSGTs can pursue at **the school level**:

- Reorganization of coursework to align to a particular paradigm (IB, STEAM, career academies, etc.)
- Allocation of resources to afford wrap-around (psych/socio/emotional) services, increased instructional support (instructional coaches, coordinators), etc.
- Adoption of professional development (by school site or cluster) from external vendors to meet the needs specific to a cluster's vision and/or population
- Expand internship and career placement opportunities for students
- Waiving certification requirements in non-core subjects to source talent to support signature programs
- Flexibility to select textbooks that best align with student needs and signature programming
- Provides opportunities for flexible scheduling to meet student needs (longer year, scheduling for working students in high schools, credit recovery opportunities, etc.)

Academic Program

District Level Strategies

While APS expects each school's LSGT to explore school-based solutions to improve the academic achievement of their student populations, APS will also make changes to its support systems to drive increases in academic achievement **at the district level** through:

- Expand early childhood offerings
- Improving retention policies, creation of a grade 8.5, and other drop-out prevention innovations
- Creation of a College and Career Academy with Atlanta Tech
- Increase opportunities for ACT/SAT prep, AP/IB/Dual Enrollment
- Expand Blended and Virtual Learning opportunities
- Targeted professional development opportunities to improve literacy and math instruction
- Creation of a Positive Behavior Support framework that provides resources, support, and programming to schools
- Creation of Wraparound Support partnerships to increase social emotional learning and support systems for students with needs

Talent Management

School Level Strategies

APS has structured its charter system model to allow meaningful Autonomy and input at the school level to address the need for improved talent acquisition, development, management, and placement. These are potential school-based solutions LSGTs may choose to pursue:

- Schools may choose to reorganize their staffing models based on data, cluster vision, etc.
- Selection of targeted professional development that responds to student data and/or aligns with signature programming
- Flexibility in certification requirements to recruit highly-qualified educators for signature programming and/or school specific needs
- Shifting resource allocations in order to hire high-leverage positions needed at school (instructional coaches, guidance counselors, etc.,)
- Restructuring teaching assignments/class segments/instructional delivery to maximize teacher effectiveness (altering class segment lengths, team-based teaching, etc.,)

Talent Management

District Level Strategies

While APS has already initiated a thorough renovation of its talent acquisition, development, management, and placement systems and practices, APS will utilize its broad flexibility waiver to rethink its human resources even further with the following district-level strategies:

- Flexibility in teacher contracting requirements to ensure high-quality educator placements in every school (ex. possible 90 day probationary period for new teachers)
- Reforming compensation models to ensure equity among educators
- Improved access and alignment of professional development opportunities for teachers and principals
- Development of teacher/principal leadership programs
- Implementation of strengths-based hiring, development, and management
- Redesign of human resources department and systems to decrease redundancies, increase transparency in hiring and placement among schools, and increase autonomy to principals in hiring and resource allocation

Systems and Resources

School Level Strategies

APS recognizes that many of its challenges surrounding its systems and resources stem from outdated, inefficient, and/or inconsistent district-level policies and procedures and accordingly, much of the responsibility to address this challenge falls at the district level. LSGTs may address the issues stemming from inadequate and/or inefficient systems and resources at the school level through:

- Utilizing budgetary flexibility and discretionary dollars to shift resource allocations to meet the needs of the school
- Streamlining the school's approach to increasing student achievement through consistent Title I planning, school improvement planning, and strategic planning
- Innovating programmatic delivery options to maximize funding, use of teachers, and student engagement (early intervention, remedial, gifted, ELL, etc.)
- Select targeted professional development opportunities that meaningfully develop teachers in school's signature offerings

Systems and Resources

District Level Strategies

APS has already initiated a thorough investigation and redesign of its systems and resource management. APS will accomplish even more through charter system status by utilizing the following strategies:

- Maximizing use of limited district and state resources to meet needs of students, schools, and the district
- Removing impediments and spending requirements to allow school-based budgeting
- Redesigning Title I comparability planning to allow for targeted and compliant use of Title I funds that maximizes school-based budgeting
- Infrastructure improvements in technology support, HR, budgeting, and data tracking
- Strategic facilities and capital plan to maximize use of district resources

Culture

School Level Strategies

In addition to the LSGT serving as a needed platform for parent and community voices at the school level, LSGTs may also improve culture through the following school-level strategies:

- Implementation of signature programs that align to the vision of the communities served
- Creating innovative educational opportunities that increase student engagement and buy-in at the school
- Selection of positive behavior support focus and supports provided by the district to fit the specific needs of the school community
- Development/selection of student programming to meet social emotional learning needs of student community
- Adoption of character development and behavioral support strategies that are the right fit for the school

Culture

District Level Strategies

APS believes that improving school culture and rebuilding community trust in the district are essential to APS's ultimate goals of delivering a high quality and effective academic program for its students. APS will implement district-level strategies, such as:

- Organization of LSGTs in lieu of LSCs to decentralize decision-making and provide for authentic community engagement
- Develop customized system of supports for restorative justice and discipline reform
- Creating meaningful partnerships with communities, businesses, leaders, families, and educators to drive APS forward as a system
- Improving organizational culture through strengths-based leadership and efficient department workflow and design
- Increasing ethical training and practices, for both the district and its schools

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

9) What are your school system's specific student performance expectations for your five-year charter term?

Required Academic Performance Goals

Goal One

- *During each year of its first five-year charter term, the APS Charter System shall “beat the odds” as determined by a formula measuring expected student growth.*
- This is a student growth measure that essentially tests whether students in APS are “beating the odds” at APS, i.e., doing better than they would have otherwise. Assesses subgroup performance

Goal Two

- *During each year of its first five-year charter term, each System Charter School shall “beat the odds” as determined by a formula measuring expected student growth. The charter system will decrease the number of schools not beating the odds each year.*

Goal Three

- *The Charter System will demonstrate proficiency and/or improvement on the CCRPI.*
- By: meeting or beating State Average in Year 2 (if less than state)
- By: beating State Average in Years 3-5.

Note: APS may supplement these with additional academic and operational performance goals.

LOCAL SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

10) Explain how your system will transition from Local School Advisory Councils to effective and fully functioning decision-making Local School Governance Teams (LSGTs).

11) Address the formation of the local School Governing Teams, including how members are selected, the terms of members, and how and why members may be removed.

Charter System Transition Timeline

Planning/Year 1

Submit application June 2015, Receive State Approval in Fall/Winter of 2015

January-February (2016)	LSGT informational meetings (all schools)
February-March (2016)	LSGT elections Feb-March 2016
March-April (2016)	LSGT initial training March-April 2016
May-August (2016)	LSGT strategic planning process
August-September (2016)	LSGT SBS training
September-November (2016)	LSGT creates SBSs
October-November (2016)	LSGTs submit SBSs that implicate cluster plans or require district-wide increased flexibility to CAT for feedback and recommendations
December-January (2017)	LSGTs receive budget/finance training
February (2017)	Superintendent approves or denies SBSs
January-March (2017)	LSGTs begin budget approval process

Stakeholder Input on LSGT Member Structure

LSGT Composition

9 voting members* *can be increased through SBS process*

Principal is a nonvoting member

3 Parents elected by parents

3 Teachers elected by staff

2 Community members nominated by the principal

1 HS/MS student is a nonvoting member* *can be amended to vote through SBS process*

1 "Swing Seat" to be filled by Parent/Community Member depending on skills needed (Only in Years 3-5)

Principal and LSGT Chair collaborate on agenda setting

2 year terms with a maximum of 2 terms(following initial staggered terms of 1 and 2 yrs.)

The Work of the LSGT

Domain	Required	Considering
Personnel	Input: Selection of Principal	Input: Annual feedback on principal's performance/interaction with LSGT Input: Interview Principal
Finance & Resource Allocations	Input: Final recommendation for school budget Input: #/type of personnel, curriculum costs, supply, equipment, maintenance, operations costs	Autonomy: Develop/manage requests for funding to support new innovative proposals.
Curriculum	Input: Curriculum and accompanying instructional materials	Input/Autonomy: Align school's curriculum offerings and modes of delivery to cluster theme.
School Improvement	Autonomy: Establish/monitor achievement of school improvement goals Autonomy: Approval of school improvement plan and oversight of its implementation	Autonomy: Create strategic plan that incorporates school improvement and Title I planning.
School Operations	Input: school operations that relate to school improvement goals and/or charter system goals	Autonomy: Development of community communication strategies and creation of Parent/community involvement/engagement plan Input: School system calendar and district-wide initiatives

Where does the creativity come in?

LSGTs can propose strategies, solutions, innovations, etc., that are aligned to their strategic plan and are calculated to increase student achievement.

These solutions will then be vetted by the district for approval/denial.

= School-Based Solutions Process

The School-Based Solution's Path to Approval

LSGT Training Program

Clusters in the APS Charter System Model

**Maintaining an emphasis on cluster organization while distributing
autonomy to the school level**

Clusters in the APS Charter System Model

Questions? Comments?

Charter System Public Hearings and Cluster Meetings

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Tuesday, May 5, 2015

North Atlanta Cluster

Sutton Middle School

2875 Northside Dr., NW 30305

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Grady Cluster, Jackson Cluster

Maynard H. Jackson High School

801 Glenwood Ave., SE 30316

Wednesday, May 6, 2015

Mays Cluster, Therrell Cluster

Benjamin E. Mays High School

3450 Benjamin E. Mays Dr., SW 30331

Thursday, May 14, 2015

Carver Cluster, South Atlanta Cluster

South Atlanta High School

800 Hutchens Rd., SE 30354

Thursday, May 7, 2015

Douglass Cluster, Washington Cluster

B.E.S.T. / Coretta Scott King Y.W.L.A.

Harper-Archer Middle School

3399 Collier Dr., NW 30331