



Charter School Renewal Application

For Schools Seeking Renewal from Both
DeKalb County School District and the
State Board of Education
to
Operate in SY25-26

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8.	Attach a copy of any admissions (pre-lottery) application the charter school proposes to use. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066 and SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.05, any admissions application must conform to the open enrollment requirement. Therefore, admissions applications should be limited to a student's name, contact information, home address for the purpose of verifying the student's residence within the school's attendance zone, grade level, and information required for any enrollment preference, such as identifying a sibling already enrolled at the charter school. If the charter school proposes to utilize a weighted lottery for educationally disadvantaged students, the admissions application may also include questions tailored to the subgroup(s) the school will offer an increased chance of admission according to the weighted lottery guidance available on GaDOE's website.	75
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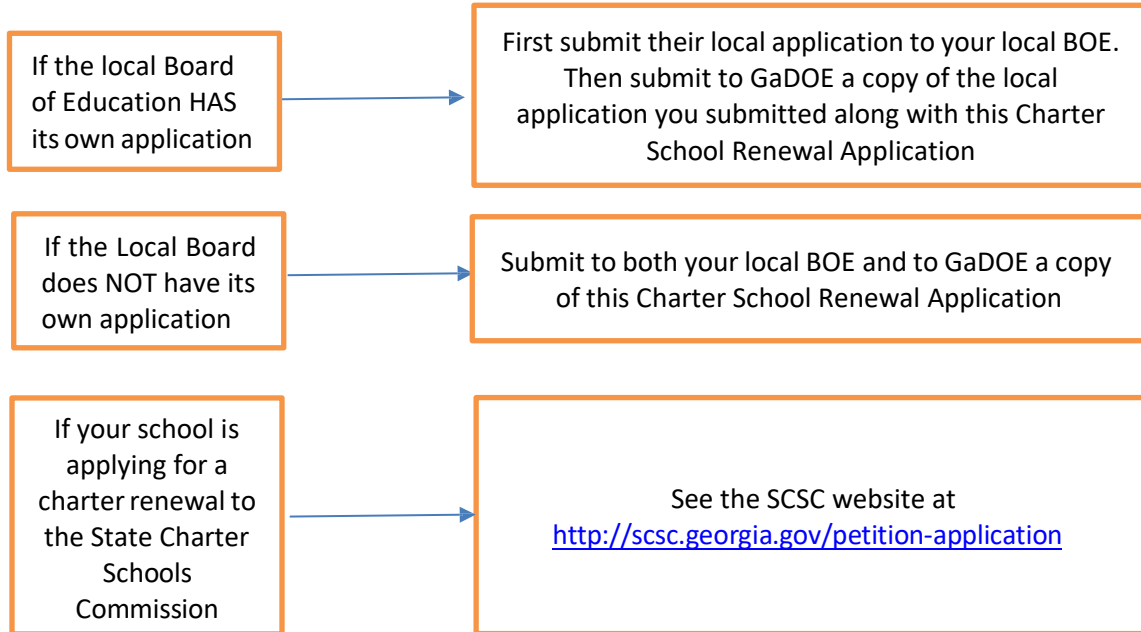
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16.	Attach proof of the school's insurance coverage, including the terms, conditions, and coverage amounts.	442
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18.	Attach a copy of any agreements with your local school district or Board of Education. (Exhibit 18 – DCSD Assurances and Required Statements)	N/A
19.	Attach a copy of any Letters of Intent and/or agreements detailing any proposed partnerships, including agreements with other local schools/systems for the charter school students' participation in extracurricular activities such as interscholastic sports and clubs.	443
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23.	Complete and attach the budget template located on the Charter Schools Division's website: Please note that the budget template includes:	
	23a. A monthly cash flow projection detailing revenues and expenditures for the charter school's first two (2) years of operation;	478
	23b. A spreadsheet projecting cash flow, revenue estimates, budgets, and expenditures on an annual basis for each of the five (5) years of the initial charter term.	484
	23c. Back-up documentation proving the legal reality of additional sources of revenue included in the budget template, including any funds other than state and local funding, including bank statements and/or signed grant award letters.	N/A
24.	Attach the résumé for the charter school's Chief Financial Officer.	486
25.	Attach the charter school's signed GADOE Assurances Form.	39

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26.	Attach the charter school's signed and notarized.	42
27.	Attach the charter school's signed Local Board of Education Resolution approving the charter school's application.	TBD
28.	Attach the charter school's signed Governing Board Resolution approving the charter school's application. This will serve as the formal petition to the SBOE.	490
29.	For conversion schools only, attach the charter school's Confirmation of Teacher and Parent Vote.	N/A

HOW DO I KNOW WHICH APPLICATION TO SUBMIT?

This Charter School Renewal Application form is for locally-approved start-up and conversion charter schools seeking charter renewal from both a local Board of Education (BOE) and the State Board of Education (SBOE).



INTRODUCTION

A charter school renewal application is a legal petition to a local Board (or Boards) of Education and the State Board of Education seeking renewal of a charter school contract.

There are two types of locally-approved charter schools – start-up charter schools and conversion charter schools. This Charter School Renewal Application is for both start-ups and conversions.

- A start-up charter school was a brand new school that did not exist before it received your initial charter school contract.
- A conversion charter school is an existing public school that became a charter school when it received its initial charter school contract.

The evaluation of your application will focus on whether your charter school has achieved the academic, organizational, and financial performance you promised in exchange for broad flexibility from Georgia's education rule and laws when you received your most recent charter contract. The evaluation will also determine whether:

- The charter school has complied with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures (including the Charter Schools Act of 1998, as amended [O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-2060 through 20-2-2071] and State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9-.04 *et seq.*);
- The academic, organizational, and financial plans are still viable; and

- The charter school is still in the public interest.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review all resources available on the GaDOE's Charter Schools Division website prior to drafting and submitting a charter school renewal application (<http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Charter-Schools/Pages/default.aspx>), including the standard charter contract template, which is what the State Board of Education will approve, and the most recent Charter School Renewal Memo.

Georgia has a commitment to ensuring all children receive quality educational opportunities. For this reason, we prioritize approving and renewing charter schools that focus on serving at risk populations, including students who are economically disadvantaged and/or live in rural communities.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Before the State Board of Education can renew a charter contract for your locally-approved charter school, your charter school renewal application first must be approved by your local Board of Education in accordance with the rules and regulations of that local board. To facilitate the state's review of your locally-approved application, you must submit to GaDOE an exact copy of the application you submit to your local BOE.

GaDOE will review the charter school renewal petition you submitted locally at the same time that your local BOE is reviewing it. If you agree to make changes to your application to obtain local BOE approval, you must also submit to GaDOE a copy of the final version of the application that your local BOE approved. The final version of your locally-approved application is the one GaDOE will share with the State Board of Education when recommending approval or denial of your charter contract renewal.

A successful charter school renewal application approval process includes (1) your local BOE's review and approval, (2) GaDOE's review, (3) a panel interview at GaDOE, (4) a recommendation from GaDOE's Charter Schools Division for State Board of Education approval, and (5) SBOE approval.

Please note that, while GaDOE does not have an application deadline, applications are processed and interviews are scheduled by GaDOE on a first-come, first-served basis. This means that you must submit your application early enough to obtain SBOE approval at least 6 months in advance of your upcoming academic year. Since it can take up to 4 months to move through the various review processes, please plan accordingly.

Please also note that filing a charter school renewal application does not guarantee that a renewed charter school contract will be granted. Failure of an applicant to adhere to any requirement may yield a defective application that is rejected before consideration. In addition, complete applications that are not strong enough to guarantee a continued successful charter school implementation will be recommended for denial.

Submission to GaDOE of the initial charter renewal application you submitted to your local BOE and, later, of the final version of your application approved by your local BOE, must be by mail, UPS/FedEx, or hand-delivered to: **Georgia Department of Education, Charter Schools Division, 2053 Twin Towers East, 205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive, SE, Atlanta, Georgia 30334**

Please note that faxed or emailed applications will *not* be accepted as your formal submission. Only complete petitions that comply with these guidelines and the technical requirements below will be evaluated. Applications will not be returned, so please keep a copy for your records. In addition, please note that all information in applications submitted to GaDOE are subject to the Georgia Open Records Act.

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Applications will not be returned, so please keep a copy for your records. In addition, please note that all information in applications submitted to GaDOE are subject to the Georgia Open Records Act. To fill in the check boxes, double click on the check box; a dialog box will come up for you to choose checked; then click okay and the dialog box will close.

GADOE & DCSD CHARTER APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECKLIST

The Charter Application Package must comply with the following submission procedures.

- ☐ An Application Package includes original and 2 copies of the following items:
 - ☒ **APPLICATION COVER PAGE** (Use the form on page 10 of this application; the form may not be altered in any way.)
 - ☒ **CHARTER APPLICATION** (Answers to the questions posed on pages 11-14 of this application.)
 - ☒ The Application is limited to 75 double-spaced pages using an 11-point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins with a header showing the school's name and a footer showing consecutive page numbers.
 - ☒ The original must be signed in blue ink. Stamped signatures will not be accepted.
 - ☒ **ASSURANCES FORMS, SIGNATURE SHEETS, AND AFFIDAVIT** (Use the Assurances Forms, Signature Sheets, and Affidavit on pages 17-20 of this application; the forms and sheets may not be altered in any way.)
 - ☐ The original must be signed in blue ink; stamped signatures will not be accepted.
 - ☐ Electronic copy of assurances must be signed. Blank copies will not be accepted.
 - ☐ **DOCUMENTATION OF VOTE – FOR CONVERSIONS ONLY** (Use the form on page 21/Exhibit 29)
 - ☐ The original must be signed in blue ink; stamped signatures will not be accepted.
 - ☒ **EXHIBITS** (See list of required Exhibits on pages 15-16 of this application.)
 - ☒ Required Exhibits should be as limited in size as possible.
 - ☒ All Exhibits must be tabbed with a header showing the school's name and a footer showing consecutive page numbers.
- ☒ The Application Package must be submitted electronically to charterschools@dekalbschoolsga.org via DropBox.
- ☒ The Application Package must include a:
 - ☒ 1 . Microsoft Word version of the Application Cover Page (page 10)
 - ☒ 2 . Microsoft Word versions of the Application and Exhibits
 - ☒ 3 . PDF Version of the Complete Application Packet in the following order: Cover Sheet, Application, signed Assurances Form(s), Affidavit, and Exhibits (including Exhibit 18 - DCSD Assurances and Required Statements). Exhibit 18 – DCSD Assurances and Required Statements may not be altered in any way.
 - ☒ 4 . PDF version of the Locally-Approved Charter School Partners Roles and Responsibilities Chart
 - ☒ 5 . Excel version of the completed Budget Templates
- ☐ Faxed or emailed copies will not be accepted. Only complete applications that comply with these guidelines will be evaluated.

SIGNATURES REQUIRED UPON DELIVERY. COMPLETE APPLICATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY 12:00 P.M. ON THURSDAY, October 17, 2024 IN ORDER TO BE IN THE 2024 REVIEW CYCLE FOR OPERATING IN 2025-2026.

Petition for (Name of School): DeKalb Agriculture Technology & Environment, Inc.

Delivered by (Charter School Representative): Dr. Maury L. Wills

Received by (DCSD Representative): _____ Date and Time: _____

CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Check One: ☒ Start-up Renewal ☐ Conversion Renewal

When was the original charter term start date? 2005

How many charter terms has the school been in existence? 5

Name of Charter School: DeKalb Agricultural Technology & Environment, Inc.

Name of the Georgia nonprofit corporation that currently holds the charter:

DeKalb Agricultural Technology & Environment, Inc.

Local school system in which charter school is physically located: DeKalb County Schools

Contact Information for the Governing Board Chair

Contact Person:	<u>George Jones</u>	<u>Chair</u>
	Name	Title

Contact Address: 1492 Kelton Drive, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Telephone Number: 404.861.7940

Fax Number: 678.999.9294

E-mail Address: gjones@dateacademy.org

Contact Information for the Person Filling out this Application

Contact Person:	<u>Dr. Maury Wills</u>	<u>CEO</u>
	Name	Title

Contact Address: 1492 Kelton Drive, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Telephone Number: 404.200.8627

Fax Number: 678.999.9294

E-mail Address: maurywills@dateacademy.org

CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL APPLICATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Name of Charter School: DeKalb Agriculture Technology & Environment, Inc.

Proposed Charter Term Length: 2026-2031 (5)

Current Grade Range: K – 8 Grade range at the end of the charter term: K - 8

Expected enrollment at the end of the charter term: 770

This application was approved by DeKalb County Local Board of Education on _____, 2025

For each year of the NEW charter term, indicate the number of students the charter school plans to serve.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Year 1	88	79	79	79	85	89	93	93	93	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	778
Year 2	88	79	79	79	85	89	93	93	93	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	778
Year 3	88	79	79	79	85	89	93	93	93	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	778
Year 4	88	79	79	79	85	89	93	93	93	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	778
Year 5	88	79	79	79	85	89	93	93	93	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	778

1. State the charter school's mission and describe why this initiative is important to the community it serves. Also provide a brief description of any defining features of the school. Include how stakeholders were involved in the petition process and how they will continue participating. (350 words or less)

The mission of the DeKalb Agriculture Technology & Environment, Inc. (D.A.T.E.) is to educate a student population about the essential needs to consider environmental, agricultural, and technological ramifications to improve conditions and other business decisions; via a hands-on, community-oriented instructional curriculum. This Certified STEM Academy is an anomaly in that it is the only k-8 charter school in Georgia, in the Southeastern Region, and even in the USA to have a *Triple Integration Approach* to education: **E**nvironmental, **A**gricultural, and **T**echnological Sciences.

The academy's mission supports the legislative intent to increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation of its curriculum. Our Vision of, "Engaging Hands on with Minds On", with the implementation of Environment, Agriculture, and Technology provides relevance, relationships and rigor

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for the learning ecosystems purposed for our scholars, faculty and staff, and stakeholders.

Present and past parents, members of the community, and other interested parties have had a long-standing history of being heavily involved with the creation of this school, since 2004, and have continued to be extensively involved in the subsequent renewal processes, task forces, and surveys.

To increase parental input of the charter objectives, information concerning 4 areas of the renewal process have been consistently extended and shared with faculty and staff, parents, students, and the community as stakeholders via monthly meetings, shared postings of petition goals and objectives, and committee reviews by (Parents, Students, Faculty/Staff, Governance Board). Moreover, a website and link has been created to receive feedback of charter petitions, for those directly not on said committees. The four areas in which stakeholders have been involved in the renewal process of the school by participating in renewal Committees are:

1. Academic, Foci, Organizing Modifications.
 2. 21-26 Charter Petition Analysis and Modifications.
 3. Review of New Charter Laws, Organization, Academic, and Financial Goals.
 4. 2026-2031 Petition, Governance Review and Structure.
2. Describe the charter school's academic program, specifically focusing on why it is innovative in your school district(s). Include mention of any waivers of state law and SBOE rule that are needed to implement the academic program. Be sure to describe any special characteristics of your charter school, such as a special population or some other feature or features which enhance educational opportunities. (350 words or less)

D.A.T. E. affords its students, parents, and constituents a prescribed, comprehensive, and interactive curriculum and academic program that is extensive and pervasive of the integration of environmental, technology, and agricultural exposure. The implementation of greenhouse and aquaponics' programs, agribusiness and agri-farming (domesticated livestock), organic farming, fishery science, technology innovation and modernization, and ecological awareness are all critical components exposed to scholars.

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The school's rich and authentic academic plan requires specific waivers, besides the broad flexible waiver granted to accommodate the activation of all academic and organizational goals, which includes personnel and school council. The academy believes that academic, organizational goals and general makeup of the school's structure would be compromised and lessened without the implementation and execution of said waivers.

- A. The Academy may also waive TITLE 20 Education Chapter 2. Elementary and Secondary Article 17. Teachers and Other School Personnel Part 7 in terms of termination, suspension, nonrenewable, demotion and reprimand O.C.G.A. § 20-2-940 (2007 The employee acknowledges that his/her job duties set forth in the attached job duties (...) are general only and that employee is required to perform other tasks as may be assigned by the school's CEO, or designated personnel. The employee Revised 34 October 17, 2008, understands and agrees that the provisions of O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-940 are not applicable to this employment Agreement and hereby waives any present due process rights in connection with termination other than those rights provided for by this agreement or terms in the employee handbook. Officer or C.E.O., acting in cooperation with the Board, may exercise this authority at his or her discretion.

- B. The law, the State Board rules, or the DOE guidelines can change from time to time. Some of these changes are designed to apply to charter schools, specifically or to all schools universally. However, some changes can be inconsistent with one or more provisions of the charter and may address issues that are already dealt with in the charter in a different, but still mutually acceptable manner. By having the Full Flexibility Waiver, D.A.T.E. can remain in compliance with both the law and the charter without having to go through a formal charter amendment process.

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3. Describe the charter school's organizational structure, specifically focusing on its innovation and need for flexibility, its general partnership structure with an educational service provider (ESP) if any, and the school's community interest and need. (350 words or less)

DeKalb Agriculture Technology & Environment, Inc. (D.A.T.E.) has been operating as a DeKalb County Charter School since 2005. As a Start Up charter school, our organizational structure remains viable as the Board of Directors, Parents, Faculty and Staff, and Students all strive to enhance the learning experiences and outcomes of our community. Our reason for desiring a charter school 20 years ago was to provide students with an optimum choice for within DeKalb County Schools south-side region that offered a blended environmentally, agriculture, technology focused learning environment.

Many organizational innovations continue to take a lead in providing and supporting clear and concise learning objectives and outcomes.

- The mandate of majority parents and 3 community representatives with expertise in (Environment, Agriculture, Technology, Education) areas that relate to the unique curriculum at the school serve on the Board of Directors.
- The active role of parents/guardians in the renewal and revitalization of the school.
- Operating and implementing Best Practices of Standards of Effective Governance in Areas of
I. Governance II. Strategic Planning III. Board and Community Relations IV. Policy Development V. Board Meetings VI. Personnel, VII, Financial Governance, VIII. Ethics.
- Internal Leadership Structure Organization: Elementary Principal, Middle School Principal, Chief Academic Officer and Chief Executive Office, Academic Coach, Instructional Support Specialist.
- Implementation of Infusion and Apprenticeship Instructors for maximized co-teaching experiences.

The stakeholders of the community advocated for such a school in their community that would increase the awareness and sensitivity, provide knowledge and understanding, improve attitudes, and enhance skills and participation of all technological and environmental/agricultural entities, which affects the local community

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and society. Our school mantra, “Learning with Relationships, Relevance, and Rigor” summarizes why D.A.T.E. was founded and why we want to continue operating as a Premier DeKalb County Charter School, while reshaping the mindset of our scholars’ environment.

The community support for the school is evident as the sole elementary/middle school education entity that concentrates on the comprehensive approach. With partnerships, such as Georgia Perimeter College, Piedmont Technical College, Chattahoochee Nature Center, Stone Mountain Park, Arabia Mountain, Gwinnett Heritage Center, Dekalb Watershed Department, Honeywell, Home Depot, Miracle Grow, Costa Farms, STEAM Inc., Sprouts, and more importantly, our parents in the community; we are evolving into becoming an environmental, agricultural and technological conscious community.

PAST PERFORMANCE

1. Complete and attach as Exhibit 5 the Accountability Report available on the GaDOE's Charter Schools Division website to show the school's performance during each year of your current charter term and include with your charter school renewal application. This Accountability Report will be presented to the State Board of Education with your charter petition, so please ensure it is accurate.

See Exhibit 5 (Attached)

2. Provide a narrative describing how the charter school performed in meeting the academic and organizational goals set forth in its current charter contract. In your narrative:
 - a. Address the school's performance in each year of your current charter term.
 - b. You are urged to include any supporting charts, tables, or graphs that provide quantitative data.
 - c. If your charter school did not meet all of the goals in its charter contract, explain any mitigating factors to which this can be attributed, and explain how the school plans to address them in the upcoming charter renewal term requested.

The D.A.T.E. Accountability Spreadsheet for years 2021-2026 is attached as Exhibit 5. This collection of analytic data reveals the tremendous success and accomplishments toward the charter academic and nonacademic goals during the current charter term years. As that spreadsheet shows, D.A.T.E. met an overwhelming 98% of 30 specific targets of **Innovative Feature Goals, Academic Goals, Achievement Goals, Organizational Goals, and Financial Goals** during that reported and calculated charter term. Although D.A.T.E. surpassed the progress indicators for state and district in 2021, 2022, 2023. D.A.T.E. did not surpass the *progress* indicator for comparison of elementary schools for 2024 but did so for middle schools.

The Progress indicator of the CCRPI uses Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs) to measure how much growth students demonstrate relate to academically similar peers. D.A.T.E. experienced an overall decrease of 10.7 points from the 2023 score to the 2024 score. Based on the three indicators for Progress, (ELA, math, and progress toward English Language proficiency), the rate of growth, as measured by achievement level designations, showed that our ELA and math performances declined by one or more achievement levels. In ELA, the subgroups for 2023 included black and economically disadvantaged

students; both subgroups outperformed the 2024 score in ELA as more than 70% of the students were at achievement levels 3 and 4, indicating they scored better than at least 41% of their academically similar peers.

The math performances from 2023 showed an additional subgroup (ELs), with more than 70% of the students in that subgroup scoring at achievement levels 3 and 4. Although the math achievement levels for all students and other two subgroups were below 60%, these scores were still about 10 percentage points higher than the 2024 scores. The 2024 scores did not have ELs as a subgroup. This was also the first year of the new math standards.

D.A.T.E. has maintained extraordinary academic success, within all its academic contractual yearly terms. With respect to CCRPI scores, D.A.T.E. (**CCRPI-81**) exceeded the overall DeKalb County School District's (**CCRPI-74**) and the State's (**CCRPI-79**) averages for 2024. There were no reported CCRPI scores for the years 2022, 2023. Also, in Appendix 5; there are academic targets, specifically attained for D.A.T.E. that addresses our unique and special population of sub-groups:

While assessing the Georgia Milestones, D.A.T.E. 's Content Mastery, and Readiness indicators exceeded state and district local elementary and middle comparison school's years, for 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025: D.A.T.E. African American, ESOL, and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups demonstrated typical/high growth in targeted areas ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies each year for 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025. Although in 2024, new math standards were implemented, the scores resulted as baseline data for 2025, which also surpassed local district and state results. Specifically, there was at least 4% points increase of high growth in 2023 subgroups of African Americans, and Economically Disadvantaged in ELA for 2024. In 2025, there was at least 4% points increase in subgroups of African American and Economically Disadvantaged.

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Most recent 2025 Milestones results indicate Core Content Average Developing and Above Achievement Levels surpassing the local district and state for ELA with 83% / 85% for Elementary and Middle School averages, 88% / 91% for Math Elementary and Middle School Averages, 76% / 95% for Science Elementary and Middle School Averages, and 94% for Middle School Social Studies Averages. In addition, D.A.T.E. demonstrated improvements in percentages of students increasing to Proficient and Distinguished School Levels Averages with 50% in English, 52% in Math, 64% in Science, and 52% in Social Studies, all exceeding Proficient and Distinguished Levels for local district and state.

During Charter Term, specifically 2021, 2024 and 2025, statewide recognition highlighted the academy's academic strengths, with U.S. News & World Report identifying D.A.T.E. in the top 100 Elementary and Middle Schools in Georgia. In 2025, U.S. News recognized D.A.T.E. as being in the top 100 of Georgia Middle Schools (87), (286) in Georgia Elementary Schools, (15) in DeKalb County School District Elementary Schools, (5) in DeKalb County School District Middle, Schools, (12) in Georgia Charter Elementary schools and (11) in Georgia Charter Middle Schools out of total 94 charter schools in Georgia. These recognitions only give a testament to the hard work and commitment to the educational expectations and standards.

Our Innovative Featured Goals continue to be highlights of our teaching and learning culture community. Our implementation of Environment, Agriculture, Technology (EAT) is the cornerstone of our success with our ever so evolved ecosystems of aquaponic, organic farming, and husbandry. As we begin to focus on continuation of future proof strategies, programs, targeting growth plans, and revised initiatives to monitor subgroups and analyze individual growth targets and progress after 2025, our success in meeting goals is consistent. This is credited with a combination of a high-quality instructional design framework, accountability, extended school hours and remediation and tutorial programs, as well as structures advanced learning opportunities, and additional integration of infused technological, environmental, and agricultural curriculum, with collaborated partnerships among the parents, students, and the faculty and

staff.

Moreover, in analyzing the academy's organizational goals, including financial goals; D.A.T.E. continued to reach and meet all its targeted organizational goals, such as minimizing student absences to less than 3%, and having a 97% attendance rate, increasing student promotion to > 95%, increasing students and faculty retention and attendance by > 90%, increasing climate satisfaction for stakeholders with 4 out of 5 stars for 2024, implementing successful and completed audits, maintaining high cash reserves of close to 9 million dollars.

3. Describe the school's current financial situation. In your description:
 - a. Include an explanation of financial results.
 - b. Detail any financial successes or struggles the school experienced during the current charter term. Include any instances of fraudulent behavior or accusations of fraudulent behavior by school staff, governing board members, or anyone else associated with the school.
 - c. Explain how the school will address any struggles discussed above as well as any outstanding debts. Explain how the school will allocate any surplus funds.

The governing board and school administrators have been fiscally responsible throughout the years, as evidenced by the financial performance, from 2006 to 2024, by managing the resources available. The school's revenues have exceeded its expenses regularly resulting in an increase in net assets from \$196,010.00 on June 30, 2006, to \$8,299,377 on June 30, 2024, and \$8,645,964 on June 30, 2025. The school has operating cash reserves of \$8,735,884 as of June 30, 2024, and \$9,405,627 on June 30, 2025. In addition, the school's bond cash reserve of \$216,430 as of June 30, 2024, exceeds the bond requirements. The school has been able to maintain operating cash reserves of at least 60 – 295 days of normal operating expenses. The Organization entered into a promissory note dated August 20, 2019, with Public Finance Authority, "PFA", in the amount of \$10,545,000. The proceeds of the loan were used to extinguish an existing promissory dated August 30, 2011, in the amount of \$6,510,000 from which the Organization funded the purchase and renovation of a 39,000 square foot building which houses the charter school's classroom and administrative space along with five acres of land. The balance of the proceeds of the PFA loan were used to construct a new 11,000 square foot annex building to accommodate the growth of the

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school. Public Finance Authority issued three series of bonds to fund the promissory note and the Organization's obligations to repay its promissory note are aligned with the payment obligations to the bondholders except that the Organization makes payments on the promissory note monthly which are held by a trustee and remitted to the bondholders on a quarterly basis. The PFA Series A bonds were issued for \$6,690,000, Series B for \$3,500,000, and Series C for \$355,000 for a total of \$10,545,000. During the construction phase payments of principal and interest at 4.429% were required. Upon completion of the project the interest rate was modified to 3.543%. PFA Series C bonds were retired last period using principal from the organization. The remaining bonds, PFA Series A and B will mature on June 1, 2044, however the Organization has a balloon payment due on June 1, 2029, to repay the note in full. As of June 30, 2024, the Organization owes \$9,228,001 and on June 30, 2025, \$8,830,000 on the promissory note to PFA. The school continued to meet all bond covenants requirements from 2011 – 2024, except in 2025 when Debt Service Coverage Ratio of 0.63 is below 1.10 times the maximum annual debt service on all indebtedness outstanding. However, the organization has maintained excellent bond rating and has not defaulted on any aspect of the loan agreement. The school's success in the implementation of the Before and Aftercare Program as a profitable source of revenue continued to enhance the financial stability of the school. The program enhanced yearly revenue of \$36,438.00 in 2006 to \$182,655.00 in 2024, and \$211,326 in 2025 which is another revenue source in the school's funding surplus as a reserve. With financial challenges forthcoming, the profitable Before/After will be a main source to support the academy's financial status in the near future. All these efforts are a result of sound financial decisions and monitoring implemented by both the governing board and school administrators.

On January 15, 2025, the school Finance Committee submitted three (3) viable options to pay off Series B Bond to the Board of Directors for review. The first option is to pay off on June 1, 2026, the principal balance of \$2,935,000.00, second option to pay off on December 1, 2026, the principal balance of \$2,885,000, and third option to pay off on June 1, 2027, the principal balance of \$2,835,000. These pay off recommendations are to mitigate the struggle of meeting the Bond Covenant Debt Service Coverage Ratio

experienced on the period ending date of June 30, 2025.

The school implemented a salary structure in 2016 that is competitive in the Atlanta Metro public schools to attract quality and retain experienced teachers. The increases were from 10% to 20% in the first year of implementation and continued to increase from year to year in consideration of the Atlanta metropolitan schools' systems without any impact on the bottom-line financial result of the school. This has produced excellent results in the academic performance of the students, which is a result of a maintained student retention rate of 97% throughout the years.

The governing board and school administrators have exercised sound monetary and fiscal policies by cutting spending and raising other sources of funds to ensure that the financial position of the school is solvent. The governing board and school administrators have strongly monitored both capital and operating budgets, focusing on management control, and performance measurement aspects. In all, the governing board and school administrators focus leadership in handling any perceived financial challenges, such as any intending slow economy and/or shrinking public education dollars in a fiscally responsible way, which has allowed the school to weather the economic storm, attract qualified teachers with competitive wages in Atlanta metropolitan school systems and continue to serve students with a quality educational program. The governing board and school administrators are determined to implement ways to continue on the previous year's financial performance. Yearly sound business practices and fiscal knowledge are now part of the governing board requirement for ongoing fiscal training that will continue to strengthen and enhance their fiscal knowledge and understanding.

The school's CFO is a forward thinker, seasoned, and an effective leader with excellent communication skills, who has demonstrated excellent accounting and financial competence. D.A.T.E's CFO has a strong strategic financial vision, is team-oriented, has excellent decision-making abilities and problem-solving abilities, has a strong understanding of school operations, and finally, has a deep understanding of business,

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with a result-oriented mindset. The CFO communicates effectively with the governing body, creditors, and regulatory agencies, and provides critical leadership in formulating plans to secure the school's financial future. He has led in formulating the financial success of the school as the first Charter School in Georgia to secure rated bond financing and in the successful bond refinancing of August 2019.

D.A.T.E.'s current CFO has been with the school since 2006 and has worked with leadership and the governing body in the fiscal management issues that have advanced essential traits of creating financial successes at D.A.T.E throughout the years.

As a viable source to support non-academic programs, as well as academic programs, our PTO has been financially supporting our students, parents, and teachers collectively. With the many fundraisers that are supported by the academy's stakeholders, the academy has been able to improve and expand its literacy focus with an addition of over 1,000 STEAM-related periodicals, software, and books to fill our Media Center. In addition, the many clubs and organizations have been benefiting from PTO involvement with academic field trips and expeditions sponsored by the PTO. These field trips, such as preservation and nature centers, museums, watershed plants and facilities, and other school themed events to support the enhanced academic program. Out of state excursions to extracurricular activities, including cheerleading contests, and football and basketball events. PTO's financial contributions over the years have been outstanding and appreciated. They continue to invest and improve our agricultural, environmental, and technological focus with added materials and supplies to further increase collaboration between parents and the faculty and staff. There is no doubt that all parties: The Board, school leadership, teachers, parents, are strongly committed to the continued successes that are thriving at D.A.T.E and are always looking for new opportunities to gain experience. With over thousands of dollars provided to the school as educational gifts, we are humble, but proud to have a significant organization that morally and financially supports the academy.

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During the fiscal year of 2025, the school created a 501c3 Foundation to look into fund raising activities for the school. The D.A.T.E. Foundation will continuously work on the following goals to increase fiscal responsibility and accountability.

1. **Raise Funds:** Secure financial resources to support school programs, facilities, scholarships, and extracurricular activities.
 2. **Enhance Educational Opportunities:** Provide funding for innovative teaching methods, technology, and learning materials.
 3. **Build Community Engagement:** Foster relationships between the school, parents, alumni, local businesses, and community members.
 5. **Promote Excellence:** Encourage academic achievement, arts, athletics, and other student development programs.
 6. **Sustainability:** Establish an endowment or long-term funding mechanisms to ensure continuous support.
4. Provide a brief overview of the school's current governance structure. In your description, you must include:
- a. Specific examples of decisions the governing board has made on behalf of the school;
 - b. Specific examples of decisions the school leader has made on behalf of the school;
 - c. How the governing board holds the school leader, any charter partners (ESP/CMO/EMO), and any independent contractors accountable; and
 - d. The governing board's training program for the current and proposed charter term. Attach as Exhibit 6 a copy of the board's Governance Training Plan.

D.A.T.E's Board Governance Structure has been very effective in establishing a shared governance approach, with one voice and allegiance to the charter's mission, goals, and objectives. With active monthly meetings throughout the year, board meetings and committee meetings are scheduled to review the monthly budget, targeted objectives, and a review of the school's strategic plan, including the academy's academic, organizational, and financial goals and performances.

The Boards Governance Structure complies with the Standards of Effective Governance of Georgia Non-Profit with focusing on the following domains: Governance, Strategic Planning, Board Community

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Relations, Policy Development, Board Meetings, Personnel, and Financial Governance, Ethics.

As a previous highlight of the boards' fiscal responsibility and accountability, Standard and Poor's Financial Services has previously rated the governing board as highly functional, accountable, and structurally sound. Because of the fiscal accountability and shared governance and impeccable oversight, the school was provided with the first of its kind in Georgia, a Rated BBB+ Bond to a charter school with over a 7 million dollars loan to purchase, renovate, and expand existing faculty and property in 2011. During another previous charter term (2020), the board was afforded the opportunity to secure another bond at 10 million dollars and build another educational annex to support our themed focus and enhance our fine arts initiative.

In addition to an upgraded Standards and Poor's rating, and an additional STEAM Annex to the campus, the governance structure is indeed sound and solid. In the charter school's 2021-2022 Scorecard for Organization, completed by local authorizer-DeKalb County School District, D.A.T.E. met standards at 100% for Governance Performance Standards, Essential or Innovative Features, and Legal Compliance Performance Standards. For the 2022-2023 Scorecard for Organization, completed by local authorizer-DeKalb County School District, D.A.T.E. met standards at 75% for Governance Performance Standards, 100% of Essential or Innovative Feature and Legal Compliance Performance Standards. For 2023-2024 Scorecard for Organization, completed by local authorizer-DeKalb County School District, D.A.T.E. met standards at 88% for Governance Performance Standards, 100% for Essential or Innovative Features, and Legal Compliance Performance Standards. The Governance Board continues to implement and review policies, as well as monitor and review the Strategic Plan. In addition, financial stewardship has been a progress goal to measure the financial fiduciary of its governance board. The board has been shown great capacity to set salaries and benefits comparable with the top five school districts in the metro area, recognizing the importance of fair and just compensation for educators.

Just as important, the board has shown fiscal accountability and responsibility with overseeing almost 9

million dollars in reserve, which the board continues to meet all charter covenants and financial obligations with high regards. The school's leadership team and board members, being unified, have made significant contributions to the overall academic and organization of the academy, with ongoing restructuring and constant feedback from all stakeholders. The governance board and leadership team, along with stakeholders, have redefined its vision, yet again, to capture our ever-evolving curriculum and focus. With its new vision, **"Hands on Minds On"**; our lead committees continue to take part in rediscovery and decision processes, along with revising goals and accountability that affect every area of D.A.T.E. These committees not only assist the governing board, but also provide leadership and a scope of work, so that administrators, faculty and staff, and even students can follow and support the vision and mission of the school.

Moreover, stability of the board has been one of the greatest assets to the maturity and growth of D.A.T.E. Having an eight-member board, with the majority seats being held by parents, D.A.T.E. continues to be a parent driven school with students being a focus and priority. The board has made many significant strides and accomplishments as a solid body with tenure on average being > 9 years. To provide adequate support and guidance to our theme and mission; the environment, agriculture, and technology, experts from the community and business agencies have been appointed to the board. The Board of Directors' skill set and knowledge span from members, who work in the environmental field as a Federal Environmental Air Protection Enforcer, Technology Engineer Executives, a Retired School Superintendent, a CDC Executive, and a former Community Activist and Mayor.

The culmination of proficiency in governance for the academy has been built on adequate training and development, consistent accountability and oversight, and a genuine desire to support the leadership of the school in any way possible, while still holding leaders accountable. This accountability by the board encompasses monthly monitoring of financials, creating and monitoring policies and procedure, progress monitoring of organizational goals via strategic planning execution scales, and qualitative feedback from

listening sessions, and finally, the culmination of yearly audits and annual reports. The board has been diligent in seeking ongoing required training in the areas of governance and leadership, finance and budgeting. Leadership and Community Relations and Strategic Capacity training have been additional areas that the board has sought for ongoing development. The board has maintained its training requirements, for all charter termed years, 2021-2025.

The board remains confident that all areas of training will be properly executed and completed as mandated to ensure the governance board continues to be fiscal responsible. The Governing Boards' Training Program, **(See Exhibit 6),**

The Governing Boards' Training Program, (See Exhibit 6), for the remaining years and renewal contractual years will consist of the required Domains of: II. Strategic Planning, V. Board Meetings, VII. Monitoring Financial Performances VIII. Ethics, and for current board members for posts (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7), who have experience of more than two years. Due to the board's interest and need to collaborate with the community, team leaders, and other stakeholders; the board recommended Domains II and III. Community Building and Strategic Planning for additional training for indicators, such as a community focus of development and the implementation of an action plan consisting of monitoring and of reporting progress of measures, targets, and effectiveness in accordance with the school's strategic plan. Not only will newly elected members take on this additional training of Domain II and III, but current board members are committed. Newly elected board members in posts 4 acquire training in the areas of Domains of: I. Governance Training, VII, Ethics, along with the III. Board and Community Relations.

With sound training and prudent judgement, the board is stable in supporting the leadership every step of the way in making day to day operational decisions. The administrator leadership of the academy continues to make sound judgments in the areas of providing financial recommendations, such as salary, capital projects, human capital, directional growth, and community stewardship service projects.

D.A.T.E. has also been able to be creative with its organizational framework, encompassing an elementary and a middle school.

Much of the D.A.T.E.'s leadership team has been in place since the formation of the school. D.A.T.E.'s leadership team consists of a C.E.O., Principals for Elementary and Middle Schools, a Chief Academic Officer for Curriculum and Instruction, and a Dean of Students, an Academic Coach, and an Instructional Support Specialist, who all support the Rigor, Relationship, and Relevance components of our curriculum. Leadership has been stable at D.A.T.E., with all leadership team members having at least an average of 14 years of tenure with the academy. With stability in leadership as well, the school community of parents and students continue to work together to improve the teaching and learning conditions to develop and accelerate D.A.T.E. as an outstanding learning community.

5. Describe how the school provides state- and federally-mandated services to **students with disabilities**. Reciting the requirements of law and rule is insufficient. Your description must include the school's practices and procedures to:
- Evaluate and identify students with disabilities;
 - Develop, review, and revise Individualized Education Programs (IEPs);
 - Integrate special education into the general education program;
 - Ensure that the school facility meets the requirements of other related laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504;
 - Address student discipline;
 - Handle programming disputes involving parents;
 - Ensure confidentiality of special education records;
 - Purchase services from special education vendors or to contract with your local district to provide a continuum of special education services and how this arrangement will work; and
 - Secure technical assistance and training.

At the Dekalb Agriculture Technology & Environment, Inc. (D.A.T.E.), students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are supported by paraprofessionals, related service providers, special education teachers, and/or general education teachers. These professionals implement research-based strategies and instructional accommodations to ensure students have meaningful access to the curriculum and that their

unique learning needs are met.

Each student's IEP is developed and reviewed annually by an IEP committee, which includes the parent or guardian, special education teacher, general education teacher, LEA representative, and any related service providers. When necessary, the committee reconvenes to amend the IEP in response to evolving student needs. Students with IEPs are educated alongside their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate. Each student is assigned a case manager responsible for monitoring the implementation of IEP goals and ensuring the provision of necessary support and resources to achieve their goals.

Special education teachers provide specially designed instruction through Co-Teaching models in the general education setting and through Small Group instruction for students requiring a higher level of support. Additionally, paraprofessionals offer supportive instruction within general education classrooms for students needing extra assistance. D.A.T.E. adheres fully to the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities are given equal opportunities to participate in school programs, events, and extracurricular activities as their non-disabled peers.

When a student with an existing IEP enrolls at D.A.T.E., the parent or guardian is welcomed by the Director of Exceptional Education. A meeting is then scheduled with the new IEP committee to review the current IEP and discuss appropriate services and placement at D.A.T.E. All placement decisions may or may not be located at D.A.T.E. depending on the needs of the student. If a parent or guardian has concerns about the services provided, the IEP committee will reconvene to address them. A representative from the Exceptional Education Department at D.A.T.E. will follow up to ensure the issue is resolved to the family's satisfaction.

To protect student privacy, D.A.T.E. provides training to all staff who handle special education records.

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These records are securely stored in locked locations, and all documents containing personally identifiable information are shredded rather than recycled.

For students who exhibit learning and/or behavioral needs but do not have an IEP, D.A.T.E. offers additional support through the Student Support Team (SST). Teachers or parents may refer a student to SST. The SST assesses the effectiveness of instructional interventions and collaborates with families to develop individualized support plans. Students with 504 Plans are also supported through the SST process. If a student requires services beyond those provided by the school's current staff, D.A.T.E. will coordinate with the Dekalb County School District (DCSD) under the terms of the "Wrap-Around Services Agreement" or contract with licensed external service providers.

6. Describe how the charter school provides state- and federally-mandated services for English Learners (ELs). Reciting the requirements of law and rule is insufficient. Your description must include the diagnostic methods or instruments that are used to identify and assess those students, as well as the instructional program that is provided to ELs.

Our goal is to ensure that we are developing both English language proficiency and academic language proficiency in the content areas. English learners will not be excluded from curricular and extracurricular activities at D.A.T.E. because of the inability to speak and understand the language of instruction. D.A.T.E. will take appropriate measures to ensure that our English language learners can fully participate in all academic programs, clubs, sports and other activities. Language support services will be provided as needed to promote inclusion and engagement in all aspects of school life.

As stated in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Opportunities Act (EEOA), "Public schools and state educational agencies (SEA) have a legal obligation to remove barriers and ensure that students who are not fully proficient in English can meaningfully participate in their educational programs and services."

D.A.T.E. uses the following practices and procedures to implement an evidence-based language instruction educational program.

English Learners Entrance Procedures-Identification and Enrollment Home Language Surveys (HLS)

The statewide standardized home language survey is used during the enrollment process. Parents are required to complete this form during registration. The survey is administered to kindergarten students and newly arrived immigrants. Per OCR and ESSA Title I, Part A requirements, the HLS must be in a language and format the parents can understand, to the extent practicable. It is against this background that we have ensured that the HLS are translated into different languages on our registration platform. The rationale for the use of the home language survey is to help us to identify the primary or home language that is spoken at home. If written translation of a language is not available, D.A.T.E. is in partnership with a company that is able to provide oral interpretation services at no cost to the parents. The state provides clear and specific instructions with regard to the responses to on the survey, and how they can be used to determine students who are potential English learners.

Screening

Based on state specific guidelines with the use of the HLS, once it is determined that a student is a potential English learner, then per ESEA/ESSA Sec. 3113(b)(2) the student is screened within 30 days of enrollment. D.A.T.E. uses the statewide English language proficiency screener developed by WIDA. The two screeners used are the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten and the Grades 1-12 Wida Screener. The WIDA Kindergarten Screener is administered to potential EL students enrolling in kindergarten (1st or 2nd semester) and in the 1st semester of Grade 1. The WIDA Screener assesses English language proficiency (ELP) for potential EL students in Grades 1 through 12, administered from 2nd semester Grade 1 onward.

Parent Notification Procedures

According to the Georgia Department of Education, “The OCR and Title I, Part A requires LEAs to notify the parents regarding their child’s EL status and placement in a language instruction educational program. (Georgia Department of Education, 2024). The first step taken once students have been screened and

identified based on the entrance criteria established by WIDA involves sending a “Notification of Initial Eligibility” letter to the parents or guardian.

Overview of ESOL Program

Once students have been screened and identified as English learners, they are identified as ELY in Infinite Campus and placed in our ESOL program. The goal of our ESOL program is to ensure that we are developing both English language proficiency and academic language proficiency in the content areas. This is accomplished by using the WIDA English Language Development Standards in conjunction with the Georgia Standards of Excellence. We fully embrace the fact that the responsibility for educating the whole English learner child, both in language development and academic content, is shared by regular classroom teachers and English language specialist teachers. D.A.T.E. uses the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model of instruction with a push in delivery method. The two full time ESOL teachers push into the classroom and support the English learners through collaboration with the content area teachers. This results in the use of a combination of co-teaching models, while using the components of SIOP model such as lesson preparation, building background, many and varied strategies, interaction and comprehensible input and assessment. The Wonders Reading Curriculum which is a comprehensive k-6 English language arts curriculum designed to build literacy through a research-based approach. Another aspect of our program involves developing language plans for our English learners. D.A.T.E. uses Elevation platform to develop individual language plans for active English learners and waived students who do not make positive band to band movement on the ACCESS. These plans outline goals and strategies/intervention. These are shared with the content area teachers and are used in small group instruction to provide language intervention for our ELs. The goal is to develop academic English at the next higher level of English language proficiency (ELP) as indicated by the most recent screener or ACCESS score.

English Learner Exit Procedures

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 , as amended by the Every Student Succeed Act of 1965

of 2015, 20 U.S.C. 6823(b) (2015). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1177>, requires that schools or districts establish standardized statewide entrance and exit procedures for English language learners. D. A.T.E. uses the procedures for exit and entrance as recommended by the Dekalb County School District. The following assessments are used to evaluate English learners' academic English language proficiency in social and instructional English and their language skills in the content areas of science, social studies, mathematics, and English language arts. These assessments are aligned with the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework.

1. WIDA Kindergarten ACCESS
2. WIDA grades 1-12 ACCESS
3. WIDA K-12 Alternate ACCESS

WIDA Kindergarten ACCESS

The WIDA kindergarten ACCESS measures the English language development of kindergartens across four language domains. The domains are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The assessment is used to determine students who no longer require language support services provided by the ESOL support specialist. The following exit criteria are used to determine an English learner's status:

Clear Exit Kindergarten WIDA ACCESS Criteria

- Overall CPL or DCPL ≥ 5.0
- Listening PL ≥ 5.0
- Speaking PL ≥ 5.0
- Reading PL ≥ 5.0
- Writing PL ≥ 4.5

*Kindergarten students' scores must meet all language domain criteria, no exceptions.

Grades 1-12 WIDA ACCESS

The WIDA Grades 1-12 ACCESS measures English language development for students in grades 1-12 across four language domains. The domains are speaking, listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Clear Exit WIDA Grades 1-12 ACCESS criteria

- Overall CPL or DCPL ≥ 5.0

Reclassification

D.A.T.E. uses the criteria set by the Dekalb County School District for Reclassification. The option for reclassification is available for English learners in grades k-12; however, it is not available for kindergarten students.

Reclassification Criteria

D.A.T.E. uses Overall CPL of 4.3 to 4.9 to consider an English learner for reclassification. If a student meets this criterion, then a reclassification team consisting of the ESOL teacher, an administrator, the parents, and the student's content area teachers is convened. The members of the team examine other factors such as the student's English language proficiency and academic performance, ELA assessments performance, and Georgia Milestones assessments to determine if a student can be reclassified from EL=Yes to E=1.

7. Provide the number and percentage of students receiving In-School Suspensions, Out-of-School Suspensions, or Expulsions during the current charter term (e.g., the past 5 years). How does this discipline and dismissal data compare to the [Office of Civil Rights data](#)?

	In-School Suspensions		Out-of-School Suspensions		Expulsions	
Ethnicity/Race	Number & Percentage of Total Population					
Latino Hispanic	0	%	0	%	0	%
American Indian	0	%	0	%	0	%
Asian / Pacific Islander	0	%	0	%	0	%
Black / African American	1	.9%	15	2%	0	%
White	0	%	0	%	0	%
Two or More Races	0	.9%	0	%	0	%
Total Population						

8. Describe in detail how the charter school's students, governing board, faculty, and staff reflect the sociodemographic diversity of the community served by the charter school. If the charter school does not reflect the community's diversity in one or more areas of the areas listed above, provide a comprehensive plan to address this need for diversity. Included in such a plan could be, for example, the use of targeted recruitment or the use of a weighted lottery to provide an increased chance of admission for educationally disadvantaged students pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a)(1) and State

Board Rule 160-4-9-.05(2)(g).

The charter schools' students, governing board, faculty, and staff does indeed reflect the socioeconomic diversity of the community it serves in by the charter school. D.A.T.E. services a large student percentage of African Americans at 91.3%, Hispanic students at 6%, American/Alaskan Native at .03%, Asian/ Pacific Islander at 1.4% and students of Two or More Races at 1.3%.

While the school is in one of the largest counties, DeKalb, the school is fixed in Stone Mountain, Georgia; and we are blocks away from a very diverse city, Clarkston. With Stone Mountain having a total demographic of close to 80% African Americans and 1.3% of Two or More Races; and Clarkston having close to a total 71% African Americans, 12.31% Asian, 11.82% White, the academy meets the diversity description of inclusiveness. D.A.T.E. continues to surpass the two cities with Native American population totals by having almost 7% during its charter tenure, affirming the academy's goal in maintaining its diversity on the levels of socio-economic, as well as, its gender, and intellectual abilities. Traditionally, the governing board, faculty and staff also reflect a similar diversity in race, ethnicity, and gender to continue to provide a well-rounded education for an inclusive community of stakeholders.

9. Describe in detail any difficulties faced during the charter term that were not already addressed above, how the school dealt with such difficulties, and if they remain an issue for the school. Also explain how the school plans to avoid these difficulties during the upcoming charter renewal term.

The school has not faced any major difficulties that has threatening its operational capacity, governance, or financial existence.

PROPOSED CHANGES

10. If the answers given above to questions 1 - 9 reflect a change to any of the following, please provide the rationale for the change:

There are no significant proposed changes with governance, financial, or operational.

A. ACADEMIC CHANGES:

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- The academic program and curriculum.
- The use of waivers/innovations.
- School programs – this includes Students with Disabilities, Gifted and Talented, English Learners, etc.
- Any assessments being used.
- Any administrative positions.

B. GOVERNANCE CHANGES:

- The school's governance structure.
- The school's governing board composition, including its diversity.
- The school's relationship with an Educational Service Provider or other Charter Partner.
- The relationship with the local district.

C. FINANCIAL CHANGES:

- The school's financial structure.
- The school's CFO.
- The school's relationship with any major creditors (e.g., landlords, investors etc.)

D. OPERATIONAL CHANGES:

- The school's facilities – this should include any proposed expansion or renovations.
- The school's attendance zone and any enrollment priorities being used (see O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a)(1)).
- Whether the school's students, faculty, and staff reflect the diversity of its attendance zone.
- Whether the school will utilize a weighted lottery to provide an increased chance of admission for educationally disadvantaged students pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a)(1) and State Board Rule 160-4-9-.05(2)(g).
- Any services provided to students such as transportation, food service, etc.
- The grades the charter school will serve. Please note this includes adding additional grades or reducing current grades.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

11. Briefly describe how the school has and will continue with its proposed changes to serve the needs of its students for the upcoming (renewed) charter term.

As we look into the future, the academy's academic and organizational goals continue to be strategic and prescribed to the school's unique needs to establish expected outcomes for building capacity. The academic and organizational goals are smart, realistic, strategic, and operative. Although some continue to not be measured by local standardized assessments, but national standards, they directly affect student achievement as they serve as guidelines for action, directing and rechanneling employees, parents, and student efforts. As these organizational and academic goals serve as guidelines for action, define standards of performance, and

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provide a source of motivation; they ultimately support the academy with a vision of capturing academic soundness and exceptionality. This academic soundness is supported and executed with the entire stakeholders of students, faculty and staff, and parents, while achieving by its very existence and operation. The academy seeks to improve our innovative practices to increase academic opportunities.

EXHIBITS

The following Exhibits are required to complete your Charter School Renewal Application Package. Please tab the Exhibits to match the item numbers below. Exhibits should be as limited in size as possible.

1. Attach an official copy of the certificate of incorporation for the required Georgia nonprofit corporation from the Georgia Secretary of State. Please Note: All charter school contracts—including those of start-up and conversion charter schools—must be held by a Georgia nonprofit corporation.
2. Attach a copy of the by-laws for the nonprofit corporation.
3. Attach a copy of the governing board's Conflict of Interest Policy.
4. Attach a copy of the governing board's Conflict of Interest Form.
5. Attach a completed Accountability Report.
6. Attach a copy of the governing board's Governance Training Plan using the governance training memo available on GaDOE's website.
7. Attach a completed Locally-Approved Charter School Partners Roles and Responsibilities chart. This chart shows the balance of authority between the charter school's board and management, as well as the autonomy of the charter school from the district.
8. Attach a copy of any admissions (pre-lottery) application the charter school proposes to use. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066 and SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.05, any admissions application must conform to the open enrollment requirement. Therefore, admissions applications should be limited to a student's name, contact information, home address for the purpose of verifying the student's residence within the school's attendance zone, grade level, and information required for any enrollment preference, such as identifying a sibling already enrolled at the charter school. If the charter school proposes to utilize a weighted lottery for educationally disadvantaged students, the admissions application may also include questions tailored to the subgroup(s) the school will offer an increased chance of admission according to the weighted lottery guidance available on GaDOE's website.
9. Attach a copy of the policy setting annual enrollment, re-enrollment, and lottery deadlines, including a description of the lottery procedures detailing how enrollment priorities will be applied and an assurance of complete transparency in its procedures.
10. Attach the charter school's annual calendar and the charter school's daily school schedule.
11. Attach a copy of a sample scope and sequence for a proposed course/grade level.
12. Attach a copy of the charter school's Student Code of Conduct.
13. Attach a copy of the charter school's Student Discipline Policy and Procedures, including any Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS).
14. Attach a copy of the rules and procedures concerning how the school will address grievances and complaints from students, parents, and teachers. Include the role the governing board will play in resolving such grievances and complaints. If this is included in another response, please indicate that.
15. Attach a copy of the charter school's Employee Policies and Procedures.
16. Attach proof of the school's insurance coverage, including the terms, conditions, and coverage amounts.
17. Attach a copy of any intended education service provider contracts or arrangements for the provision of education management or support services, including with any EMO, CMO, ESO, etc. Such contracts shall describe the specific services for which the contracting organization is responsible. Such contracts should clearly delineate the respective roles and responsibilities of the management organization and the governing board in the management and operation of the charter school. Such contracts must also include the fee structure.

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18. Attach a copy of any agreements with your local school district or Board of Education (Exhibit 18 - DCSD Assurances and Required Statements). Exhibit 18 – DCSD Assurances and Required Statements may not be altered in any way.
19. Attach a copy of any Letters of Intent and/or agreements detailing any proposed partnerships, including agreements with other local schools/systems for the charter school students' participation in extracurricular activities such as interscholastic sports and clubs.
20. Attach a copy of any MOU/lease/proof of ownership for the school's facility.
21. Attach a copy of the school's Certificate of Occupancy.
22. Attach a copy of the facility's Emergency Safety Plan.
23. Complete and attach the budget template located on the Charter Schools Division's website: Please note that the budget template includes:
 - A monthly cash flow projection detailing revenues and expenditures for the charter school's first two (2) years of operation;
 - A spreadsheet projecting cash flow, revenue estimates, budgets, and expenditures on an annual basis for the first five (5) years of the charter term.
 - Back-up documentation proving the legal reality of additional sources of revenue included in the budget template – i.e., funds other than state and local funding, including bank statements and/or signed grant award letters
24. Attach the résumé for the charter school's Chief Financial Officer.
25. Attach the charter school's signed Assurances Form (see below).
26. Attach the charter school's signed and notarized Affidavit (see below).
27. Attach the charter school's signed Local Board of Education Resolution approving the charter school's application.
28. Attach the charter school's signed Governing Board Resolution approving the charter school's application. This will serve as the formal petition to the SBOE.
29. For conversion schools only, attach the charter school's Confirmation of Teacher and Parent Vote.

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Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent
"Educating Georgia's Future"

O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1(e)(2) Affidavit

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

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

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

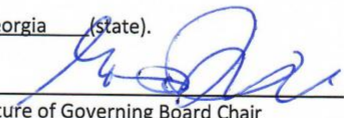
The undersigned applicant also hereby verifies that he or she is 18 years of age or older and has provided at least one secure and verifiable document (e.g., driver's license, passport, birth certificate), as required by O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1(e)(1), with this affidavit.

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

Georgia Driver's License

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

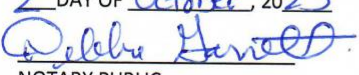
Executed in Stone Mountain (city), Georgia (state).


Signature of Governing Board Chair

George A. Jones
Printed Name of Governing Board Chair

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN
BEFORE ME ON THIS THE

2 DAY OF October, 2025


NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires:



ASSURANCES FORM AND SIGNATURE SHEET

Georgia law and State Board of Education Rule requires your school to provide assurances that it will do certain things and comply with certain laws. This Assurance Form enumerates all of these requirements and, when you submit this signed Signature Sheet with this Assurance Form as part of your Charter School Application Package, you are providing the legal assurance that your charter school understands and will do these things. This form must be signed by the school's governing board chair.

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter for (DeKalb Agriculture Technology & Environment, Inc.) located in DeKalb County is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that if awarded a charter, the school:

1. Shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations;
2. Shall be subject to the control and management of the local board of the local school system in which the charter school is located, as provided in the charter and in a manner consistent with the U.S. and Georgia Constitutions;
3. Shall not discriminate against any student or employee on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, national origin, gender, disability, age, or sexual orientation;
4. Shall be subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of the physical health and safety of school students, employees, and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the prevention of unlawful conduct;
5. Shall be subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1050 requiring a brief period of quiet reflection;
6. Shall ensure that the charter school and its governing board are subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 *et seq.* (Open and Public Meetings) and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 *et seq.* (Open Records);
7. Shall ensure that the charter school's governing board members may only receive compensation for their reasonable and actual expenses incurred in connection with performance of their duties;
8. Shall ensure that the charter school's governing board members receive initial training and annual training thereafter, provided by a SBOE-approved vendor pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2072 and State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9-.06;
9. Shall ensure that the charter school's governing board adopts and abides by a conflict of interest policy;
10. Shall comply with O.C.G.A. §20-2-210(b)(1) and implement an evaluation system as adopted and defined by the State Board of Education for elementary and secondary school teachers of record, assistant principals, and principals;
11. Shall comply with the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-14-30 through § 20-14-41 and federal accountability requirements, and participate in statewide assessments;
12. Shall adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including the IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as applicable;
13. Shall provide state and federally mandated services for English Language Learners, as applicable;

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14. Shall provide for supplemental educational services as required by federal law and pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03, and for remediation in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01;
15. Shall notify the state of any intent to contract with a for-profit entity for education and/or management services;
16. Shall notify the state of any changes in for-profit entity contracted with for education and/or management services;
17. Shall be subject to the requirement that it shall not charge tuition or fees to its students except as may be authorized by local boards by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-133;
18. Shall comply with federal due process procedures regarding student discipline and dismissal;
19. Shall be subject to all laws relating to unlawful conduct in or near a public school;
20. Shall have a written grievance procedure to resolve student, parent, and teacher complaints;
21. Shall have a written procedure for resolving conflicts between the charter school and the local board of education;
22. Shall comply with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-211.1 relating to fingerprinting and criminal background checks;
23. Shall remit payments to TRS on behalf of employees and shall employ teachers in accordance with TRS;
24. Shall ensure that if transportation is provided for its students, the school shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws;
25. Shall ensure that if the charter school participates in federal school meals programs, then it shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws and rules;
26. Shall prepare a safety plan in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185 and submit and obtain approval from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency;
27. Shall comply with the state facility requirements regarding site codes, facility codes, the submission of architectural plans for any new facility that the school may build or occupy during the charter term and all other facility requirements as established by the Department;
28. Shall be subject to all reporting requirements of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-160, subsection (e) of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320, and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-740;
29. Shall be subject to an annual financial audit conducted by the state auditor or by an independent certified public accountant licensed in this state;
30. Shall designate a Chief Financial Officer that meets all requirements as established by the Charter Schools Rule 160-4-9-.05(2)(h)(1);
31. Shall secure adequate insurance coverage prior to opening and shall maintain such coverage throughout the charter term in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia;
32. Shall acknowledge that all criteria used to calculate QBE funding may not be waived;
33. Shall ensure that 90% of QBE funds earned for out-of-system students enrolled in a virtual school must be spent on their instruction pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167.1; and

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

This Charter School Application, Assurance Form, and attached Exhibits were approved by the Charter School's Governing Board on the **2nd day of October, 2025**.



Governing Board Chair, Charter School

10/2/2025

Date

This Charter School Application, Assurance Form, and attached Exhibits were approved by the DeKalb Board of Education on the _____ day of _____, 202_.

Chair, DeKalb Board of Education

Date

Superintendent, DeKalb Board of Education

Date

If a Charter is granted, Petitioners assure that the proposed charter school's programs, services, and activities will operate in accordance with the terms of the Charter and all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.



Governing Board Chair, Charter School

10/2/2025

Date

Chair, DeKalb Board of Education

Date

Superintendent, DeKalb Board of Education

Date

DOCUMENTATION OF VOTE (*CONVERSIONS ONLY*)

This petition has been agreed to, by secret ballot, by a majority of the faculty or 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 Faculty and Instructional Staff Vote _____

Total Number of Faculty and Instructional Staff _____

Number Approving _____ Percent Approving _____

Number Disapproving _____ Percent Disapproving _____

Principal's Signature

Date

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. A student's parent(s) or guardian(s) shall collectively have one vote for each student enrolled in the school although parents of students at the school who are eligible to vote as faculty or instructional staff shall also have a single vote in the vote. Two weeks advance notice of the meeting published during which time a complete petition draft was available for review.

Date of Parent/Guardian Vote _____

Total Number of Parents/Guardians Attending Meeting _____

Number Approving _____ Percent Approving _____

Number Disapproving _____ Percent Disapproving _____

Principal's Signature

Date