

Form H - Executive Summary Summary

Emanuel County, Georgia is a state-designated FY2025 Persistent Poverty County with a 22.1% poverty rate that is experiencing rapid industrial growth, highlighted by Dongwon Autopart Technology's \$30 million, 200-job advanced manufacturing facility now under construction. EDGE College and Career Academy (EDGE CCA), an unfunded College and Career Academy formed in partnership with Southeastern Technical College (STC) and the Emanuel County School System (ECSS), opened to students in fall 2025 to prepare local students for the Heart of Georgia region's growing workforce. If funded, EDGE CCA will construct an Advanced Manufacturing and Construction Technology facility on STC's Swainsboro campus, enabling dual enrollment programs the region cannot currently offer. The Emanuel County Board of Education has committed to matching up to \$3,000,000 in E-SPLOST VII local investment and continues to fund EDGE CCA's growing annual operating budget. The site (STC Swainsboro campus), dual enrollment programs, and basic design have all been determined, accelerating the timeline.

Justification

Mission and Need - Emanuel County's 23,300 residents and 10,400-person workforce depend heavily on manufacturing and skilled trades, which employ nearly 40% of working residents — yet the pipeline connecting students to these careers has remained underdeveloped. EDGE CCA was created to close that gap, growing from 157 to 170 dually enrolled students in its first two semesters. New and existing manufacturing expansions make additional lab space a critical need.

Partnership, Governance & Leadership - The FY2027 EDGE CCA Board of Directors reflects the organizations and sectors the career academy serves: two ex-officio student representatives, one parent, one postsecondary/technical college, one K-12 district, and one private school representative — plus six business and industry members, who make up 60% of the Board's ten voting seats. Operating under approved unfunded MOUs among TCSG, STC, ECSS, and EDGE CCA, local partners have already contributed \$872,013.01 over two years,

including STC's committed land for the new facility and the ECSS Superintendent's pledge of indefinite operational funding.

Commitment and Sustainability - EDGE CCA's Board has developed its separate Strategic Plan the past two years, and reviews/revises it twice annually (January and June). The Strategic Plan is operational and is linked directly to the ECSS 2022–2027 Strategic Plan. EDGE CCA completed TCSG pre-certification in its first year of operation (May 2026) and is on track for full CCA certification in 2027.

Workforce Development - Program decisions are driven by EDGE CCA's Board of Directors using state and regional High Demand Career Lists, JobsEQ data, and local needs assessments — not simply student interest. Current dual enrollment certificates are tied to the region's High-Demand Career List. JobsEQ confirms adding Advanced Manufacturing and Construction Technology programs would close the region's two remaining high-wage sector gaps.

Standards and Curriculum - More than 90% of EDGE CCA courses are dual enrollment courses taught by Southeastern Technical College faculty, meeting SACSCOC, Georgia DOE, TCSG, and Board of Regents standards. Literacy and numeracy requirements are embedded throughout the curriculum with secondary and postsecondary advisory committees guiding curriculum development, including new industry-specific programs developed to meet regional workforce needs.

Dual Enrollment - EDGE CCA offered 16 dual enrollment technical certificates in FY2026, enrolling 100% of students in one or more dual enrollment courses. Four additional certificates will be added in FY2027 and two more in FY2028. Four additional critical FY2029 certificates — Mechatronics Specialist, Carpentry, NCCER Basic Electrical Systems, and NCCER Plumbing — cannot be added without the classroom and lab space this grant would fund.

Student Support, Evaluation & Compliance - EDGE CCA's Work-Based Learning participation (42.6%) already exceeds the FY2025 state target and will grow rapidly with the new Summer Bridge WBL Program. Individualized academic and career plans, a Plan-Implement-Evaluate-Improve evaluation cycle, targeted student achievement strategies, and an

approved Strategic Waiver School System Contract further support day-to-day operations and long-term accountability.

Innovation and Best Practices – Shown throughout the grant application is our willingness to go above and beyond for our students and employers. Our innovative EDGE CCA Summer (WBL) Program provides summer jobs for students and as well as future full-time employment opportunities. And, by listening to local employer needs, we institutionally develop/write new dual enrollment programs that meet local employer needs.

Budget and Sustainability - If awarded the GCCAP19 Grant, the Emanuel County Board of Education has committed to matching up to \$3,000,000 through E-SPLOST VII, aligned with its Five-Year E-SPLOST renewal. ECSS's annual operating commitment to EDGE CCA has grown from \$193,884.41 in FY2026 to \$354,238.01 in FY2027 and the funding is a permanent ongoing local commitment in the district's annual budget.

Conclusion

EDGE CCA has proven, in the first two years of unfunded operation, that Emanuel County families and employers will use every dual enrollment opportunity made available. With a formalized partnership among ECSS, STC, and local industry; a leadership structure that separates governance from daily operations; a demonstrated multi-year local match; and workforce data confirming urgent demand in advanced manufacturing and construction trades, EDGE CCA is positioned to convert this \$3,000,000 investment into a trained, credentialed workforce for Emanuel County and the region.