

FUTRAL ROAD ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL Executive Summary

Basic Information

Futral Road Elementary Charter School

Type: Conversion Renewal

Approved by the Spalding County School District on December 5, 2006

The mission of Futral Road is to provide a nurturing environment that ensures learning for all for life.

Academic Program

Futral Road Elementary Charter School uses academic and nonacademic goals to guide learning experiences that ensure student achievement in the essential areas of reading, math, and language arts, as well as, success in becoming fully integrated, self-motivated learners through enrichment, fine arts, and intrinsic goal setting. Continuous evaluation of objectives will allow charter stakeholders to strive for a 5% increase in annual assessments at the end of the charter petition life, as well as growth to be determined by constant review and discussion. Development of detailed evaluation tools for better communication of specific goals and growth is ongoing and is a focus of design teams and grade levels.

Through the use of academic flexibility and innovation, Futral Road is able to broaden the learning path for its students. Early release days are offered three times annually to provide staff development for teachers, paraeducators, and administrators, essential time for charter connections and planning. Futral Road is currently using a cluster approach to gifted instruction, developed by one of our gifted teachers. We are striving to develop a gifted cluster at each grade level. This model has been sanctioned by the GDOE Gifted office and differs from the once a week pull out method used by the system.

Renzulli's Principle of Enrichment stages 1, 2, and 3 have been implemented through the gifted services at our school, as well as school wide enrichment opportunities offered by staff, community, and artists in residence. Funding through PTO, grants, and charter fund raising has made this possible. Students participate in a goal setting program that encourages intrinsic motivation. They receive tokens for academic and non-academic achievements and have opportunities to celebrate their personal best in non-materialistic genres.

Fine arts including drama, visual arts, and music are offered to all students. FRECS is the only elementary school in the county offering a certified art teacher. National and state standards are taught in art and music classes. Students offer music and drama performances throughout the school year and bi-annually produce a school wide Christmas CD recorded professionally. Music, art, physical education, and technology make intense connections to each grade levels curriculum and academic standards. Fourth

and fifth grade students are grouped for these classes by multiple intelligences to better meet their learning needs.

Organization

The Futral Road Governing Board serves as the support for the charter's mission and upholds the stakeholders in achieving its goals. The foundation of the governance of the school lies in the design teams, which are inclusive of all components of the organization of the school and include parents as well as teachers and staff. A rotation schedule allows for participation in differing areas for better understanding of all parts of the charter, curriculum and the school organization. An annual retreat for teacher leaders prompts innovative ideas and renewal.

FRECS has now been in existence as a charter for ten years and as a transfer school for eight years. This in itself speaks highly of the successes this charter has provided for its learners. The local board of education has wholeheartedly supported and upheld the charter and our innovations in every way. In 2003-2004, the Parent Satisfaction Survey, an indicator of a successful stakeholder partnership, ranked Futral Road 4th overall in the state. Over the history of the transfer charter existence in the Futral Road school building, the districted area surrounding the school has had tremendous real estate growth and according to the business community, the area is very desired by homeowners. Futral Road currently has over 30 open enrollees. Upon first enacting this policy, there were five interested parties, and now there are more than 30 applications per year.

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ABSTRACT

Adapting to changing needs of students is the greatest challenge facing schools today. Through continuous participation in school improvement and Charter Schools, Futral Road Elementary School has determined that Charter Schools offer the best opportunity to bring about long-term improvement to meet student needs. This decision is based on the flexibility Charter Schools has provided for substantial community and parent involvement in the educational program of the school and for shared governance as put forth through the Charter over the past ten years. Futral Road's Charter provides the framework for the school to study and attempt innovations we believe will lead to significant improvements in our school. It serves as a "guide for beginning, performing, maintaining and building on the core work of school renewal." (Glickman, p.47)

Key components of our Charter School are the Charter Governance Board and the Parent and Community Design Team, which allow parents and community to have greater input. The Charter philosophy and plan incorporates goals and objectives parents and community.

All members of the original instructional staff participated in leadership training and team building to maximize participation in shared decision-making. The Charter has been and will be our guide to shared governance and a team approach to the task at hand. The Charter Governance Board, Design Teams, and Teacher Leader Team will ensure that the school meets its goals and objectives in the on-going school improvement process.

Futral Road's mission statement, to provide a nurturing environment that ensures learning for all, for life, embodies the spirit of the school's Charter and reflects our commitment to continuous improvement. We believe that to remove any barriers that stand in the way of student learning, we must depend on the flexibility of our Charter. We further believe that, as we improve learning opportunities for students, staff, and learning community, student achievement will improve. This improvement will continue with the reapplication and implementation of the Charter petition and its life of five years, from 2007, until 2012.

The Charter is not just a written document for students, teachers, parents, and community of Futral Road Elementary School. It is a living map for the continued growth and improvement of our learning. Our staff continues to grow tremendously as we participate in the Charter process. In addition, Charter Schools offer the opportunity for significant long-term school improvement, not only for our school, but also for others in our district. Our influence in policy change in our system has shown that our efforts have been well worth the effort, not only for our students, but also for the learning community at large. Local support for our Charter school efforts is a source of encouragement and inspiration for us all, making significant improvement in our school possible.

The process of becoming a Charter is not over when the document is complete or renewed. The Charter is a constant "becoming", a process of guiding us to new encounters with learning. Glickman stated that the path to school renewal is "both exhilarating and painful" (p.21), and as we find that to be true, we also agree with Garrison Keillor, who said, "Nothing we do for children is wasted." We have found that the opportunity to make a positive impact on education is too great to ignore and we cannot turn back now.

CHARTER HISTORY

In the fall of 1995, the staff members of Third Ward Elementary School, established 1931, began to see Charter Schools as one way to achieve school improvement. Over the following 18 months, this vision became a reality in the development of Griffin-Spalding County's first charter school, and one of the few in Georgia at the time. Due to the closing of Third Ward Elementary School after only one full year as a Charter School, the stakeholders (faculty and parents) voted to present the existing Charter for consideration to Futral Road Elementary School. On June 22, 1998, two informational meetings to discuss the Charter were held for the benefit of parents, faculty and community of Futral Road Elementary School. Meetings for faculty, staff, parents and community to accept the transfer of the revised Charter were held in the fall of 1998 and a vote was taken, determining the Charter would be transferred. An action research plan was formulated unique to the needs of Futral Road Elementary School students. The parents and stakeholders of Futral Road were also involved in meetings and voted to approve the current charter renewal request.

Futral Road Elementary School Design Teams developed action research priorities for the first year of the Futral Road Elementary School Charter. Futral Road Elementary School felt it necessary to focus on three areas for positive growth.

Increased parent involvement

Strategies for reading improvement

Development of a discipline plan/policy

These teams initiated and guided on-going research during the duration of the Charter including a survey of parents conducted by the Leadership Team. The survey was completed on August 3, 1998. Parents were asked to circle three concerns for Futral Road Elementary School. The three major concerns were ***discipline, parent/teacher communication, and high expectations for students.***

In the winter of 2001, the entire staff began the process of considering renewal of the Charter. After discussion, a presentation by the Charter Schools Office and intense brainstorming, the vote was positive for beginning the renewal process. The results of research, data collection, and planning of teachers, parents, and community resulted in the Charter School renewal for the following five years. The many successes that occurred have prompted and encouraged Futral Road Elementary School to continue the pursuit of excellence in education and once again pursue renewal of the Charter.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

GOAL I: Students will experience academic growth through exposure to an integrated curriculum that includes both basic skills and enrichment, aesthetic exposure, technological competencies, problem solving, and creative, independent thinking.

Reporting periods for student achievement were extended to nine weeks. Progress reports were shared with parents/guardians at 4½ weeks. (1997) The school system has since implemented this change system wide.

Partnering with the system technology department, lottery initiatives, and the Charter Implementation Grant has provided a computer in every classroom with access to the Internet and a remedial lab we hope to use school wide. (1997-2001) Lab implemented school wide with a certified teacher and an integrated curriculum. (2002-2006)

Intentional curricular connections between specials programming and academic subject areas. Noted as best in the system Spring 2006. (2003–2006)

Fourth and fifth grade specials served through multiple intelligence grouping to better address learning needs and differentiate instruction. (2004-2006)

The programming of art instruction, originally funded through the Charter Implementation Grant, to incorporate best practices through fine arts continues to be funded through fundraisers and grants. (1997-2006) A partnership with the LBOE, the Georgia Council for the Arts, and the Agnes B. Hunt Foundation has assured funding for our certified art teacher for the present school year. (2000-01) The local board now fully funds the Art program at Futral.

Participation in enrichment and staff development opportunities including team building, InTech, professional portfolios, and best practices has continued to impact school improvement for all of our learning community.

Study of block scheduling conducted by the Leadership Team (1998) led to implementing the first stages of block scheduling. We continue to study for further implementation with students.

Readiness of 98% of Kindergarten students for First grade as measured by the GKAP-R. (2000)

BLT scores improved an average of 24.25 points per student since 1999.

Reading Renaissance and Reading First program training and implementation was begun and continues to improve reading and language arts skills. STAR (Standardized Test Assessment of Reading) provides data for determining reading levels and pinpointing at-risk readers. (1999–2006) STAR Early Literacy has been added to give more detailed information about the seven areas of reading for emergent and struggling readers, and other elementary schools in the system have purchased the assessment software after seeing its value. (2002-2006)

Improvement of reading and comprehension skills as measured by Accelerated Reader tests and shown by the decrease in identified at risk students from 70% in 1999 to 14.7% in March 2001. Each year students continue to read at a higher volume as is indicated by point accumulation, 7000 points per year in Spring 2000 compared to 30,000 points in Spring 2006.

Saxon Math and Everyday Math pilot implementation continues to study and determine appropriate curriculum support for math skills and processing. (1999) Mountain Math is being piloted to add to the tools used to differentiate math instruction.(2006)

Math Renaissance program training and implementation was begun and continues to be used to provide data for determining math skill levels and pinpointing math skill needs. (2000) Accelerated Math usage has increased and Math Facts in a Flash software is available to improve basic math skills for those students needing such support. (2001-2006)

Math Dailies program implementation continues to address computation skills. (2000-06)

Implementation of an extended day program has pinpointed students performing below grade level in order to support basic skills and promote success. (2000-06) The Teacher Leader Team and the Organization for Learning Design Team has recommended the use of exemption in the extended day monies in using those funds for in school tutoring by certified instructors in order to reach more students. (2006)

Implementation of EIP program in the form of augmented support and class size reduction is supporting reading and math for those students performing below grade level. (2000-06)

Increase of media center use and circulation by 25%. (Spring 2001)

Increase in use of rubrics for authentic assessment.

Students are released three half-days each year to allow for staff planning (2004-2006).

Balanced school year calendar implementation for Futral Road, as well as Griffin-Spalding School System (2003-2006).

Scores on the CRCT have continued to grow on a yearly basis.

Understanding by Design and Differentiated Instruction focus 2005-2006

Professional learning tied to school improvement plan 2005-2006

GOAL II: *Students will become self-reliant, productive and creative citizens who have developed self-esteem, respect for all, the desire to learn and to think for themselves, and the strategies to reach their greatest potential.*

Development of a school-wide discipline plan required students to demonstrate citizenship skills. A weekly Pride Program was implemented and led by students. (1997)

Funding for a Learning Enhancement Classroom was requested through the LBOE to supplement the new discipline plan. (1999) Funds were secured for implementation. (2000-2006)

Staff participation in team building exercises has helped create a positive atmosphere for all the students. (1998-2001)

Surveying of administration by faculty and staff has given input to principals for improvement of leadership. These improvements include more visibility in the building, taking turns with lunch duty, and improved communication with teachers and parents. (1999-2001)

VIP (Very Important Person) Program was implemented to recognize students who do something thoughtful for others. (1998-2006)

Production of daily closed circuit newscasts, including all components of the process, continues to be led by fifth graders who exhibit interest and responsibility. (1999-2006)

Character Education Program implementation using tokens for displaying character education traits is supporting teamwork as classes collect tokens as groups. Classrooms are rewarded at the end of each month with activities in conjunction with parents, community, and Spalding High School students. (2000-2006)

Implementation of Student of the Month for each classroom fosters good citizenship traits and supports Character Education objectives. (1999-2006)

Students with 15 or more absences during a year were at 1.8% during the 2005-2006 school year. (see appendix)

Clap outs (student parade around the building with encouragement from others as a reward for meeting goals/exemplary actions or behavior.) (2005-2006)

Incorporation of personal goal setting and assessment into the daily learning experience with the use of student agendas and with yearly and daily goal-setting activities. (2003-2006)

Development of Parent Council has increased parent involvement and collaboration in the implementation of the charter, and fostered a sense of connection when the school communities of Third Ward and East Griffin Elementary schools joined to form Futral Road. (1998-2001)

Family reading night opportunities have involved family groupings in the education of their children. (1999-2006)

The use of daily agendas encourages students to write a brief narrative of self-evaluation and also aids in organization of time at school and home as well as encourages goal setting. (1997-2006)

Promotion and implementation of volunteerism through PTO, parents, community, Spalding High School students and Partners in Education has reaped the benefits of a reading buddy program, mentors, pen pals, and classroom helpers. (2000-06)

Student achievement of the personal and school wide challenge to reach Model School status in the Reading Renaissance program with 20,000 reading points and 12 Model Classrooms was achieved in spring of 2001.

Second and fifth grade classrooms have gifted clusters. The programs are designed to encourage project-based learning, pre-post tests and curriculum compacting when appropriate. (2005-2007)

PASS Program (Parents Assuring Student Success) and Love and Logic for Parents trainings implemented by Parent and Community Design Team (2004-2006).

Annual drama and musical presentation by Futral Road Elementary Curtains Up for Kids involving students and community. Supported by grants, donations, and admissions. (2003-2006)

Bi-annual professional production of musical Christmas CD by entire student body. Fund raiser for music and art programs. (2003-2005)

Annual Heart Hustle Run for the art program in its eighth year is well known in the community and supported the salary of the art teacher and now supports art supplies and charter curriculum initiatives.(2000-2006)

Continued granting through Georgia Council of the Arts has provided artists and will this year allow for an artist in residence to combine the study of bees, technological communication through the Internet, and presentation through photography and drama. (1998-2006)

Ranked 4th overall in the 2003-2004 Georgia Charter School Parent Satisfaction Survey

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PHILOSOPHY

The education of our children is the most important responsibility of society. Through the collaboration of parents, school staff and community, a secure learning environment will be provided for educating students to be life-long learners, preparing them to function as contributing members of society. Acknowledging that each student has unique needs, we will provide the opportunity for learning for all, for life.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is: to provide a nurturing environment that ensures learning for all, for life.

VISION

Futral Road Elementary will be the leader in academic excellence for all students.

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Futral Road believes:

- all children can learn.
 - academic excellence must be the standard around which a school's program is designed.
 - high expectations yield high results.
 - children need to learn responsibility and to accept responsibility for their own learning.
 - substantial family and community involvement supports and promotes student success in school.
 - learning is a life-long process.
 - learning takes place in a safe, low-risk environment, which encourages children to develop socially, mentally, and physically.
 - children must develop skills to live and prosper in a diverse society.
 - critical thinking skills are essential in an increasingly complex world.
- Because children are unique, they learn at different rates and in different ways.

ANTICIPATED STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIO

Anticipated student to teacher ratios at Futral Road Elementary Charter School are:

Pre-K	20:1
Kindergarten	16:1
1 st Grade	18:1
2 nd Grade	18:1
3 rd Grade	19:1
4 th Grade	26:1
5 th Grade	26:1

GOALS

CHARTER DURATION

This petition is for a charter duration of five years. Futral Road Elementary will serve students in grades Pre-K through 5 within the attendance zone designated by the local school system. We will also accept students through our open enrollment process who live in areas other than our attendance zone. These children will be accepted upon a space available basis. No other criteria will be used in this process.

ACADEMIC GOAL I: All students who have been enrolled at the school for at least three continuous years will be on or above grade level in reading and math by the end of fifth grade. Students will experience academic growth through exposure to an integrated curriculum that includes basic skills and enrichment, aesthetic exposure, technological competencies, problem solving, and creative, independent thinking.

Action Plan:

Students will gain knowledge and acquire skills as required in the Georgia Performance Standards and national standards.

Students will use technology to research ~~and communicate~~ information, receive instruction, and communicate understandings.

Students will participate in a variety of interdisciplinary problem solving activities.

How will we know?

5% increase in students performing at or above grade level as measured by but not limited to CRCT scores, year end assessment on STAR Reading and Math, GKAP-R, and HMA assessments

5% decrease in students performing below grade level as measured by but not limited to CRCT scores, yearend assessment on STAR Reading and Math, GKAP-R, and HMA assessments.

Annual evaluation of data will be used to develop benchmarks for future goals and improvement.

Annual Measurable Objectives:

At least 92% of students will meet/exceed expectations on math portion of CRCT.

Criteria:

Specific Academic Areas within Content and Subgroups to Address:

1st Grade – At least 96% of students will meet/exceed expectations on Math CRCT

2nd Grade – At least 95% of students will meet/exceed expectations on Math CRCT

3rd Grade – At least 99% of students will meet/exceed expectations on Math CRCT

4th Grade – At least 90% of students will meet/exceed expectations on Math CRCT

5th Grade – At least 93% of students will meet/exceed expectations on Math CRCT

Annual Measurable Objectives:

At least 92% of students will meet/exceed expectations on Reading portion of CRCT.

How will we know?

Specific Academic Areas within Content and Subgroups to Address:

1st Grade – At least 96% of students will meet/exceed expectations on Reading CRCT

2nd Grade – At least 95% of students will meet/exceed expectations on Reading CRCT

3rd Grade – At least 91% of students will meet/exceed expectations on Reading CRCT

4th Grade – At least 89% of students will meet/exceed expectations on Reading CRCT

5th Grade – At least 89% of students will meet/exceed expectations on Reading CRCT

Annual evaluation of data will be used to develop benchmarks for future goals and improvement.

Annual Measurable Objectives:

At least 85% of students will meet/exceed expectations on the English/Language Arts portion of the CRCT

Specific Academic Areas within Content and Subgroups to Address:

1st Grade – At least 85% of students will meet/exceed expectations on English/Language Arts portion of CRCT

2nd Grade – At least 89% of students will meet/exceed expectations on English/Language Arts portion of CRCT

3rd Grade – At least 84% of students will meet/exceed expectations on English/Language Arts CRCT

4th Grade – At least 92% of students will meet/exceed expectations on English/Language Arts CRCT

5th Grade – At least 83% of students will meet/exceed expectations on English/Language Arts CRCT

NON-ACADEMIC GOAL II: Students who have been enrolled at the school for at least three continuous years will become self-reliant, productive and creative citizens who have developed and display self-esteem, respect for all, the desire to learn and think independently, and the strategies to reach their greatest potential. Students will display their value of education and will show confidence in their abilities as learners.

Action Plan:

Students will work cooperatively in various peer groupings.

Students will acquire and display citizenship skills.

Students will evaluate collaborative learning in a constructive manner.

Students will use divergent and convergent thinking skills to solve problems creatively and critically.

Students will gain self-confidence through the development of self-evaluation techniques and skills.

Students will learn the importance of education through skills in goal setting and in organization.

How will we know?

5% increase in agenda use

5% increase in Accelerated Reader and Math goals achieved annually

5% decrease in discipline referrals

5% increase in Character Education tokens earned per classroom

5% increase in VIP recognitions per grade level

5% increase in total of Kindergarten students mastering all GKAP-R social skills objectives

Annual evaluation of data will be used to develop benchmarks for future goals and improvement.

Highlights of proposed improvements

More involved parents and community through restructuring of governance to include more parents in team roles

Increased use of embedded technology for learning and assessment

Student focused personal goal-setting for achievement

Integrated curriculum taught in context

Instructional and family reading nights

Study and implementation of multi-age grouping and looping

Development of a summer reading list

Increased use of multiple intelligences

Research and development of half day student support and planning time

More frequent assessments using Accelerated Math, rubrics, pre-post testing, grade level benchmarks each nine weeks, and inter-grade level planning

Increased use of authentic assessment

Provision of a new parent orientation and a parent/school handbook

Involve senior citizens in the life of our school

Thinkgate training and implementation for analyzing classroom assessments and more effective differentiation and planning

Assessment methods of reporting standards-based achievement being researched

SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICES PURSUANT TO SBOE RULES 160-4-5-.03 & 160-4-5-.01

Should our school be identified as a “needs improvement” school according to No Child Left Behind, Futral Road Elementary will provide space in which the supplemental educational service providers will work with our students and the following procedures will be followed in providing these services to our students. First, the school will meet with supplemental service providers approved by the local board of education to develop a contract for such services. Next, the school and the providers will collaboratively develop individualized instruction plans for the students receiving services. The providers will make monthly reports on student progress and needs. All students who receive these services will complete a survey in reference to the supplemental educational services they have received during the school year. Our school will also complete a survey relevant to the service provider and the services received by our students. Our students and parents will be made aware of the availability of these services, in writing, twice a year, at the beginning of each semester.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING PLAN

Study Groups

Futral Road School will continue to measure academic learning through a variety of methods described in the section on Assessment. New baselines will be established in Spring 2007, to serve as comparative data. Based on the Spring 2007, baseline data, learning targets will be set by the Accountability Design Team for the succeeding years of the Charter. Since the school's stated mission is to provide a nurturing environment that ensures learning for all, for life, the school will show annual overall percentage gains, particularly in areas of identified weakness. Throughout the Charter period, the Accountability Design Team will study test score data in order to predict student achievement, and to modify curriculum as needed. Futral Road Elementary will not waive the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. 20-14-30 through 20-14-41.

Professional Accountability

Futral Road's staff meets or exceeds all criteria set by the Professional Standards Commission, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the Georgia Accrediting Commission. Professional evaluation criteria described in the section on Personnel requires that instructional staff complete an annual self-study of their instructional techniques. Research has shown that self-study is one of the most effective ways to improve performance. The administrative evaluation requires that the building administrator undergo a more exhaustive evaluation than that currently required for other administrators within the school system. At the annual summative conference, staff members review their performances, progress toward meeting the school's goals, and establish future goals. The staff will gather information and experience the professional growth needed to meet the goals and objectives outlined in this Charter.

Financial Accountability

Requests and disbursement of funds will follow the procedures outlined in the Griffin-Spalding County Policy Manual. Yearly external and internal audits will be conducted as required by LBOE. The principal manages the local budget while the LBOE Finance Director will act as the Chief Financial Officer for the school and system. Futral Road Elementary will be subject to an annual financial audit conducted by the state auditor in accordance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-206(b)(7).

Reporting

Accountability and administration will be responsible for compiling data for an annual report indicating the progress in meeting Futral Road's goals and objectives made by the school the previous year. Design Teams will gather this data through the critical study process.

This annual report shall include, but not be limited to the following data:

an update of school and demographic data,

a description of the school's goals and objectives,

evidence of progress toward those goals and objectives,

all state mandated accountability indicators and state mandated assessment scores

revisions, if any, to the terms of the school's charter based on results of the school's on-going program evaluations and information contained in the yearly report, and

changes in the school improvement plan.

Annually, this report will be submitted or made available to:

Futral Road staff, parents, students and community.

This report is available on Futral Road's website, LBOE, and the State Board of Education by October 1 of each charter year in accordance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-2067.1 and will conform to the state department template.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Organization, Responsibilities and Procedures

The Futral Road Elementary School community has voted to renew its Charter School status and to continue to use shared governance as the preferred method of governing the school. A long-term school improvement plan is to be implemented immediately using the new organization. The school improvement plan is premised on shared decision-making and total staff, administrative, parental and community involvement for improving learning opportunities for all Futral Road Elementary students.

Statement of Purpose:

Our school community provides the following opportunities to:

improve student learning,

share decision making among faculty, staff, administration and stakeholders to promote school-wide improvement, and

allow free-flow of communication between and among the faculty, staff, administration, and the community as a whole.

Objectives:

to provide an on-going means for initiating and supporting school-wide improvement,

to promote a sense of ownership of organizational goals among staff , parents and school community,

to provide formal procedures for gathering valid information for problem identification, decision making and problem solving activities.

Compliance

Futral Road Elementary School will be subject to the control and management of the Griffin-Spalding County Board of Education, as provided in the charter and in a manner consistent with the Constitution.

Futral Road Elementary School will be subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of physical health and safety of school students, employees, and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the prevention of unlawful conduct.

Exemption

We believe that in order for school improvement to be effective, schools must have the freedom to study themselves, to develop ideas for improvement and to set their own standards of accountability, rather than those imposed by external agencies. We further believe that shared governance leads to a greater sense of ownership among the school community, which in turn, enhances learning.

Our study of our school and our school system has shown us that our LBOE has given schools within our system encouragement to design instructional programs and develop budget priorities. Futral Road Elementary will be subject to the control and management of the LEA as provided in our charter and in a manner consistent with the Charter Schools Act of 1998 and the Constitution. Over the ten years that our Charter has been implemented, several of the changes and exemptions that we originally requested have now been incorporated into district policy and procedures. We do, however, continue to require exemption from rules, regulations, policies and procedures in order to comply with the contract and provisions of this Charter. Appropriate exemption of the Georgia Board of Education (GBOE), Griffin-Spalding Board of Education (LBOE) and local administrative policies are requested according to the Charter Schools Act of 1998.

The relationship between Futral Road Elementary and the Griffin-Spalding County Board of Education has been very positive over the years of our charter. However, in the event that any conflict should arise between the two entities, it is our intention to work with the local board of education through collaborative dialogue to resolve the conflict. If the conflict is the result of an issue the school and its stakeholders feel strongly enough about and no resolution can be reached through the dialogue process, the charter exemption may be invoked allowing Futral Road Elementary to exercise its autonomy as a charter school.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-2063 (11), and to the extent allowed by the Constitution and Laws of this State, Futral Road Elementary School shall be exempt from the provisions of Title 20 of the Official code of Georgia Annotated and all state and local board of education rules, regulations, policies and procedures in direct conflict with the provisions of this Charter.

GOVERNING STRUCTURE

The Charter Governing Board (former Parent Council) will serve as the main governing body of the school. The Charter Governing Board will be constructed of parents, teachers, principal and community members, with majority of positions held by parents. Parent members of the Governing Board may be PTO members but cannot be members of any PTO committee, so as to maintain as much objectivity as possible. The Design Teams and Teacher Leader Team will guide on-going critical study throughout the period of the charter. Study groups will operate as sub-groups of the Design Teams and will assist the Design Teams in gathering data for critical studies. A discussion of the specific responsibilities of these groups follows.

Charter Governance Board

Composition of the Charter Governing Board

The Charter Governing Board will be made up of four parents, two teachers, two active community members, and the principal, for a total of nine members. This board will act as the school council entity of the school. The principal and the Governing Board, with the assistance of the staff, will nominate teacher, community and parent members for the Charter Governing Board. The Charter Governing Board members will select members of the Governing Board based on nominations received. Self-nominations will be allowed. Full-time employees of Futral Road Elementary School may not serve as parent representatives on the Charter Governing Board. Members will be selected in May and may serve for up to three years.

Members of the Charter Governance Board should exhibit some but not limited to the following traits:

Industry	Intellect	Expertise
Influence	Leadership	Affluence
Diversity	Time	

Governing board members will be held to the standards of the Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators. Members of the governing board are required to report a breach of one or more of the standards in the code of ethics by members of the governing board. If a member of the governing board is reported for violating one of these standards an investigation will be conducted and a determination as to the validity of the claim will be made by the remaining governing board members. If the claim is found to be credible, the board will have the authority to remove the member who has violated the standard. Governing board members may also be removed due to a lack of involvement. If a governing board member is determined to no longer be actively involved in the board, the board may, by a majority vote, withdraw that person's membership status.

Governing board members may withdraw from the board by delivering a written resignation to the board and submitting a copy to the school principal.

As we are a public school, Futral Road Elementary's governing board will not have a role in ensuring the school's financial stability.

Responsibilities

The Charter Governance Board is responsible for:

upholding the school's mission and vision,

ensuring that the school is abiding by the Charter Schools Act, LBOE, and SBOE policy,

upholding the LBOE policies as stated in the Charter and the exemptions,

ensuring effective organizational planning,

connecting community and parents to the educational process,

supporting the principal and the staff,

enhancing the school's public image,

self-assessing the Governing Board's performance,

upholding open enrollment and lottery selection respective to first serving students within the assigned school zone

abiding by the policy of open records and open meetings, Chapter 14 of Title 50 and Articles 4 of Chapter 18 of Title 50.

The Governing Board will uphold the school's mission and vision through active involvement in both the development and review of the mission and vision. The Governing Board will review school data (surveys, design team minutes, testing results, etc.) in order to effectively operate in this area. The Governing Board will also review the principal's performance using the administrative evaluation instrument of the school system. The principal will share the goals set for the school year and give each member of the board a copy of the evaluation instrument. During the last meeting of the school year the Governing Board will review the principal's performance using the evaluation instrument and supporting data provided by the principal. The Governing Board, administration and staff support the LBOE procedure for addressing grievances and conflicts. It will be subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. 50-18-70 et seq. (Inspection of Public Records) and O.C.G.A. 50-14-1 et seq. (Open and Public Meetings).

The Teacher Leader Team

Composition of the Leadership Team-Teacher Leader Team

~~The chairs of all design teams will comprise the membership of the Leadership Team with terms served as described within the Design Leadership guidelines with a balanced representation among grade levels and special areas:~~

Staff members and administrators will choose members. These members will serve as catalysts for change and generators of ideas. The teacher leader team will have a balanced representation among grade levels and special areas.

Administrator serves without rotation.

Responsibilities

The Leadership Team is responsible for:

~~gathering information and research from Design Teams,~~

~~focusing on priorities for school-wide improvement,~~

~~presenting recommendations from Design Teams to the Charter Governance Board,~~

~~collecting and evaluating evidence of school-wide improvement,~~

~~supporting on-going critical study within Design Teams, and~~

~~bringing recommendations and decisions from the Charter Governance Board to the Design Teams for further research and discussion.~~

The Teacher Leader Team is responsible for:

focusing on priorities for school-wide improvement,

collecting and evaluating evidence of school-wide improvement,

brainstorming ideas that will be brought to appropriate design teams for appropriate discussion, study and/or implementation

attend annual summer retreat to reflect on progress from previous year and provide areas of focus for upcoming school year

Design Teams

Composition of Design Teams

Design teams consist of faculty, staff, parents and community members. Teams will be balanced by grade level, support position, and special interest and training.

The chairperson will lead each Design Team and a secretary will take minutes of each meeting. This chairperson will rotate off after one year. Tenure on design teams is for three years. After three years faculty, staff, administrator, community members and parents will be given the opportunity to refocus within a different or new design team, depending on critical study results for the improvement of student learning. Persons who have served as design team leaders for two years will be relieved of Design Team leadership responsibility for two years following the completion of their office.

Administrators may be invited to meetings but are not required to be at every meeting.

Responsibilities of Design Teams

The design teams are responsible for developing an annual work plan, for studying concerns, ideas and proposals for school-wide improvement, documentation of school improvement and critical study foci, and for studying the effects of school-wide action. Design Team progress will be presented at monthly staff meetings by the design team chair.

Study Groups

Based on concerns for school improvement, special study groups may be formed by the design teams. Each study group is responsible for reporting to its design team. Study group membership is open to interested school community members. The design team will inform the school community through faculty meetings and minutes posted on the school computer network. Study groups will set their own meeting times. Members will serve until their task is completed.

Meeting Schedules

~~The Leadership Team meets once a month. Additional meetings may be called based on need.~~

~~Design teams meet a minimum of four times during the school year, with study groups meeting as needed.~~

~~Faculty meetings are held as needed with business issues addressed via telecommunications and instructional focus being the purpose of faculty meetings.~~

Design Teams meet monthly and will report progress to the staff the following week. Additional meetings may be called based on need.

Decision Making Process

~~The Design Teams meet to research and assess.~~

~~The Design Teams make recommendations to the Charter Governance Board through the Leadership Team.~~

~~The Leadership Team makes recommendations to the Charter Governance Board.~~

~~The model for the critical study process, which follows in the next section, also serves as a model for school governance.~~

Ideas may originate with the Teacher leader team, staff members, parents, or through design teams.

The Design Teams meet to research and assess.

Proposals are presented to the full staff at monthly faculty meetings and are discussed.

Design teams meet again and make decisions based on research, taking into account staff discussion.

Idea is implemented or tabled.

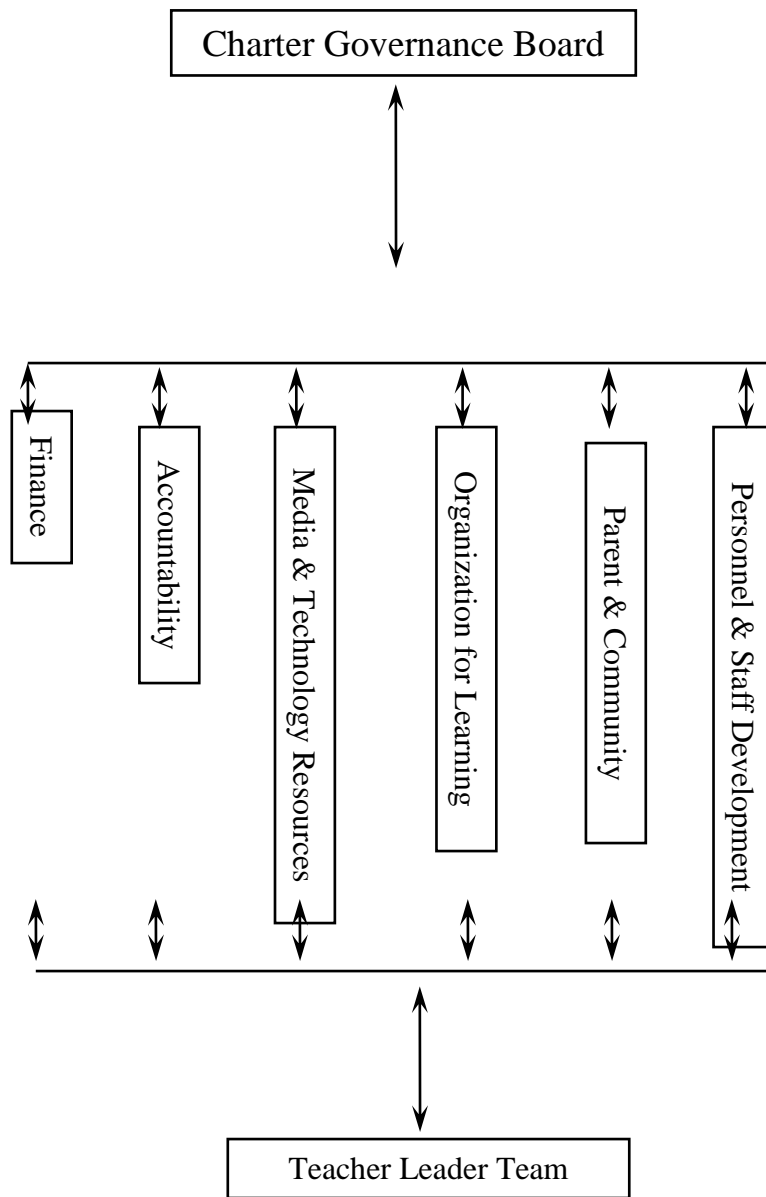
The administrator retains the right to veto decisions if necessary.

The model for the critical study process, which follows in the next section, also serves as a model for school governance.

CRITICAL STUDY PROCESS

Because attaining Charter School status is a process, not an event, Futral Road Elementary will participate in an on-going critical study that will continue to systematically collect, analyze and evaluate data to set learning priorities. This school-wide process will examine student, school and community data, along with current trends in education to determine the extent to which the school is meeting its mission to provide a nurturing environment that ensures learning for all, for life.

The following model describes the circle of continuous research:



Names and Responsibilities of Design Teams

Organization for Learning

Since curriculum drives instruction, it is crucial that this foundation of instruction be examined continually as the needs of students and local/national trends change. Achievement is directly linked to what students have been taught. To improve student learning, raise student achievement beyond state and national goals, and ensure that our students are being prepared to meet the challenges of the future, the Organization for Learning Design Team will be responsible for ~~monitoring~~ researching and recommending improvements in our school's system for designing and delivering, ~~and assessing~~ curriculum, using Georgia Performance Standards as our foundation. Critical study committees and subcommittees may be formed within the Organization for Learning Design Team based on the needs determined by this Design Team and the Charter Governance Board.

Personnel and Staff Development

As a group of professionals, parents and community members, we believe that education can be effective for all children. For changes to be effective, all staff members of Futral Road Elementary School must be actively involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the instructional program and school operations. The Personnel Design Team will make recommendations to the Charter Governance Board and the principal concerning the staffing of the school, changes in evaluation procedures, scheduling flexibility, and staff development planning. This team will guide continuous study to ensure that the staff is prepared to meet the school's goals and objectives. They will be responsible for planning the staff development budget and for notifying the staff of study opportunities.

Parent and Community

The purpose of the Parent and Community Design Team is to provide input regarding school policies and to promote excellence in education by studying ways parents and guardians can assist in increasing student achievement. The team will also work to improve relationships between parents, staff, students, and community, to promote a positive learning atmosphere between home and school, and to assist in communicating the school's mission. This team will note and encourage the support of the charter by all members of Design Teams, and Charter Governance Board. The custodial, food service, and support staff will have representation on this design team. The parent members of this Design Team will be members of the Executive Board of the PTO, creating a link between the school and the vital PTO program. The parent component of this Design Team will reflect the cultural diversity of the school. Additionally, membership on this Design Team will be open to interested members of the community, not including those sitting on the Charter Governance Board.

Media and Technology Resources

Media and technology is defined by learner needs and the school's instructional program. The Media and Technology Resources Design Team will be actively involved in establishing goals, assessing needs, selecting appropriate materials, setting priorities, modifying and implementing media and technology policies and services as needed to meet the instructional goals at the building level and connect to resources outside the Futral Road Elementary School building.

Accountability

The purpose of the Accountability Design Team is to monitor the assessment process, to set target achievement goals for each year, to ensure that the school is making progress in meeting its goals, and to assist in communicating information as is appropriate. The collection of data from testing, action research, observation, and survey will be a primary focus of this team. This team is a key component in the connection between our charter, system and state school improvement, and regional accreditation.

Finance

~~The goal of the financial plan is to provide for continued site-based budgeting and to ensure that monies are allocated where they are needed. To accomplish this, the Finance Team will recommend spending priorities. The finance team will support the funding of special programs. Grant opportunities will be filtered through the Finance Design Team. The Leadership Team representative will present finance and fund raising recommendations to the Charter Governance Board from this Design Team.~~

The purpose of the Finance Design Team is to organize school fundraisers and generate school funds. The Finance Team will recommend spending priorities for the funds generated. The team will review applications for the disbursement of school-generated funds. The Governing Board will make decisions about the approval or denial of those requests.

ORGANIZATION FOR LEARNING

Futral Road Elementary School is committed to providing varied and meaningful learning opportunities for all students. To accomplish this, the school will follow a collaborative approach to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the instructional programs and school operations. The organizational design must be responsive to the needs of students and changing trends in education. We strive to promote interaction and communication between the school staff, students, and community.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

A school is only as strong as its foundation of instruction. We believe that curriculum drives instruction and we will continually examine the curriculum to ensure the needs of students are being met. Our goal is to improve student learning by using a variety of instructional practices.

Curriculum Design

The written curriculum consists of a challenging core of knowledge and skills, which will provide a strong directional focus for education in our school. Our curriculum will include, but not be limited by, the following:

- Georgia Performance Standards
- Standardized test objectives
- ~~Job~~ Work ethic, technology, literacy and citizenship skills fully integrated into the curriculum
- National standards in math, language arts, science, social studies (as developed and approved as appropriate for local use)
- Fine arts skill development and appreciation
- Physical education, health and safety issues

Curriculum guides provide a written format for teachers to use in planning lessons and units of instruction. A variety of instructional materials will also be used to develop an integrated approach to learning and ongoing programs of remediation and enrichment will be studied, developed, and implemented. Communication and planning must occur horizontally (within grade levels) and vertically (between grade levels). Benchmarks will be emphasized at each grade level and parents will be informed of their child's progress.

Instructional Practices

Our curriculum will be delivered through, but not limited to, the following instructional strategies:

Concepts will be taught at specific grade levels with individual modifications for remediation and enrichment.

Hands-on instruction, including field trips, will provide opportunities for students to experience classroom learning in an exciting and meaningful setting.

Learning/literacy centers will provide student-focused instructional activities that promote an active learning environment focusing on reading, writing, listening, speaking, and thinking.

The use of technology during instruction in classrooms and lab settings will integrate subject areas and the writing process as students learn computer programs and skills and incorporate right and left-brain functions. A systematic approach that teaches students the spatial design and usage of the computer keyboard will be incorporated in instruction. Through the use of technology, students will develop communication and cooperation skills to work as teams/groups to conduct and present research.

Student planning and evaluation of their own work is a method that helps empower students by giving them ownership over their learning so that they begin to become more self-directed and independent. Therefore, each student will set personal goals for achievement and utilize self-assessment tools that model and encourage the cycle of analyzing, designing, implementing, and evaluating.

A diverse selection of literature in addition to traditional resources will be used as teaching tools to ensure that skills and objectives of the curriculum are integrated and taught in context.

Classroom instruction will use a variety of teaching methods and best practices in order to accommodate different learning styles, multiple intelligences, and specific objectives including but not limited to cooperative learning and group centered activities. Differentiated learning will be incorporated into instructional methods in order to increase the opportunity for all students to achieve at the highest possible level.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will guide all issues related to students identified having special needs and in accordance with available federal, state, and local funding. Federal guidelines will be followed in identifying and placing special needs students. Students will continue to receive services through programs designed or adapted to their special needs as described in an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The interrelated program will continue to provide instruction in a resource room or collaborative setting. The least restrictive environment (LRE) will be maintained and applied to all students and an inclusion model will be used when appropriate. The LRE may range from monitoring a student in the regular program to a self-contained placement within a special needs class. Students who qualify for the gifted program will be identified and placed in the program according to state guidelines and they will continue to be served as they presently are.

A child with a disability is a child evaluated and determined to be eligible for special education services for intellectual disabilities, a hearing impairment including deafness, a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment including blindness, emotional disturbance, an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, a specific learning disability, or deaf-blindness.

Special education is specially designed instruction provided that meets the unique needs of each student that is identified with a disability. Special education includes instruction in the least restrictive environment which ranges from support in the general education classroom to self-contained classes. Related services are services to

assist a child with a disability to fully benefit from special education. Services are provided by special education teachers, speech therapists, paraprofessionals, and an occupational therapist. Duties of the teachers include instruction, identification of eligible students through the referral process, development of Individualized Education Plans, and other duties as assigned. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document which is developed for each eligible student with a disability in accordance with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A web-based model is used for the development of Individualized Education Program. Training is provided at the district and school level.

Students with disabilities are reported in FTE. The school receives monies designated for the provision of materials and supports for students with disabilities. Personnel funding, materials, professional learning needs are also supported from the District.

Child find is supported through preschool identification procedures and the student support team.

ESOL students are identified through a brief survey included on the student registration/information sheet used by the school system.* Students are also given a screening if the survey indicates that they are in need of ESOL services. Students who are identified as being in need of ESOL services are then provided these services by a teacher with ESOL certification. These services are provided on a resource basis for approximately 1 hour per school day.

*1. Is a language other than English used in the home?

2. Does the student have a first language other than English?

3. Does the student most frequently speak a language other than English?

4. ESOL services previously received?

Discipline will begin with school-wide expectations, which will be established and monitored by all staff members. Infractions of these guidelines will follow set protocol. Students and teachers collaborate to make the school environment a place of learning where respect for everyone is shown. To learn from their experiences, students will accept responsibility for and consequences of their own behavior. (See appendix for complete discipline policy and procedures)

Parents will receive specific feedback regarding their children's progress on grade level curriculum objectives. They will be encouraged to become active partners in the educational process.

Believing that education at its best is an alliance of home, school, and community, we will continue to develop a working relationship with civic and community groups, businesses, governmental agencies, individuals, and other schools to support and enrich learning.

Instructional and family reading nights will be planned so parents and the community will have the opportunity to experience instructional strategies used in implementing the curriculum and to model lifelong learning.

Teachers will serve as facilitators and mentors as they create an environment for discovery. They will identify and implement appropriate strategies and guide the students into numerous explorations where meaningful learning takes place.

Professional development will include the use of seminars, workshops, speakers, locally offered staff development courses, in-services, conferences, collaboration with other educational entities, and a professional library to bring sound, research-based, innovative instructional practices into the classroom.

Teachers will work cooperatively and collaboratively to plan for effective instruction.

Renzulli's Principle of Enrichment will be incorporated in instruction of the gifted as well as all students. Opportunities to experience the world through enrichment activities, seminars, and the arts will be provided by teachers, parents, community members and outside resources. However, Futral Road Elementary does not intend to contract with any for-profit management entities.

Instructional Considerations

In order to provide flexibility in the instructional program, Futral Road Elementary will consider the following instructional practices.

The school will have the flexibility to use textbooks and supplemental materials that are more appropriate to the teaching philosophy of Futral Road School, rather than county and/or state adopted instructional materials.

We will continue to study and implement multi-age grouping and the looping concept.

We will continue to study block scheduling as a means of providing additional time for in-depth units of study.

The staff will develop a suggested summer reading list for all students.

The staff will use multiple intelligences as a means of improving the instructional program, thus improving student achievement.

~~The staff and students will be required to wear uniform colors. Fridays will be optional.~~

Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers will develop a checklist of skills to be used in screening upcoming students. This list will be given to parents at pre-registration for their use over the summer.

~~Research and development of a viable plan for Futral Road students to be released one half day each month to allow for staff planning and student support meetings will begin immediately.~~

~~Futral Road School staff and parents will pursue the implementation of a balanced school year calendar.~~ Collaboration with other feeder schools for middle and high school levels in our school zone will be a top priority.

Consider adding ½ day release per month/week for teacher planning

Increased collaboration with other feeder schools for middle and high school levels in our school zone will be a top priority.

EMBEDDED TECHNOLOGY FOR ACCESS AND ASSESSMENT

Futral Road School will continue to pursue the technology of the future. Being comfortable with new tools, having a willingness to try new ideas and skills, and having teamwork and ~~technological~~ digital-age literacy will enable Futral Road's learning community to fully integrate the use of technology for learning, constructing, and creating. Using creativity and communications will enable students, parents and educators to see technology as a tapestry of daily learning and life, seamlessly woven into learning opportunities.

To embed and integrate technology throughout the curriculum, the staff will study, but not limit itself to providing the following:

Access to Information

Students will have access to a computer lab.

Students will communicate curricular understanding, integrating their knowledge with existing and advancing technologies.

Students will utilize peripheral equipment to present multimedia productions.

Students will develop the discernment and evaluation skills needed to assimilate and utilize information gleaned from the outside world.

Educators will develop skills of discernment and evaluation of information in order to guide learners in the appropriate assimilation and utilization of such.

Educators will continue to be trained in the use of ~~peripheral equipment for presentation of multimedia projects.~~ existing and advancing technologies.

Assessment

Parents will be offered information surrounding authentic and varied assessment tools in order to understand and monitor their child's personal achievement.

The staff will participate in staff development for authentic and varied assessment tools in order to facilitate students' personal achievement.

The staff will incorporate data and input from students utilizing authentic assessment tools to complete the picture of each learner and better provide appropriate learning experiences.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the process of obtaining information about student learning that can be used to guide a variety of decisions and actions. The purposes of assessment are threefold:

The monitoring of individual student progress and the diagnosis of learning difficulties,
The placement and certification of individual students, and
The evaluation and comparison of groups to ensure the accountability of the educational system.

Because the types of assessment that are appropriate vary with the purpose of assessing, we will use a variety of instruments. These will include, but may not be limited to, teacher-made tests and daily work, teacher observation, projects, writing samples, portfolios of student work, checklists, Accelerated Reader records, report cards, parent conferences, anecdotal records and standardized tests.

Standardized Tests

It is the belief of the Futral Road staff that the key to valid assessment is a balance between traditional or standardized tests and performance-based assessments. In selecting standardized assessments, we will consider five key criteria:

- Are they standardized?
- Are they curriculum-based?
- Are they criteria-referenced, rather than norm-referenced?
- Are they fair and just for all students?
- Are they nationally validated so that they are appropriate for today's transient population?

Standardized tests are an important component of assessment, but not all standardized tests are a legitimate sample of the concepts and information being taught to ensure important student learning. We will continue to administer the GKAP, or an appropriate primary assessment, to kindergarten students, ~~the complete battery of the Stanford 9 Achievement test in grades three and five~~, the complete battery of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills Achievement test in grades three and five, and the CRCT to grades 1-5, while we research other test forms which are more appropriate for our diverse student population. We are particularly interested in obtaining an appropriate writing assessment, which will be administered to students in grades K-5.

Reporting Achievement

~~Progress reports will be issued every twelve weeks for kindergarten students and report cards every nine weeks for students in grades 1-5.~~ Report cards every nine weeks for students in grades Kindergarten-5. A midterm progress report will be sent every grading period. These reports will consist of a narrative including specific feedback on academics and behavioral skills for students in grades K-2. First and second grade report cards indicate when a child meets, does not meet, or exceeds standards. Third through fifth grade students will receive letter grades. The following grading system will be used:

A (90-100)	Outstanding
B (80-89)	Above average
C (75-79)	Average
D (70-74)	Below average
F (Below 70)	Unacceptable
T (Trying, but achieving grades of less than 70).	
M (modified to achieve IEP Goals)	
* (Working below grade level)	

Promotion and Retention

Promotion and retention will be based upon student achievement in academic courses. The Student Support Team will review all recommendations for retention, and a decision will be made by a consensus of the SST and the classroom teacher, with input from the child's parents or guardians.

Academic Accountability

Authentic measures of progress allow students a wide variety of ways to demonstrate what they know and what they can do. Futral Road will continue to use the following assessment techniques, which will include, but may not be limited to:

- standardized achievement tests
- writing assessments
- teacher-made tests
- teacher observation
- attendance records
- checklists
- portfolios of student work
- projects
- promotion/retention records
- honor roll lists
- parent conference data
- anecdotal records
- academic awards
- school-wide recognition programs
- report cards
- student self-evaluations
- progress reports
- SST data
- special education referrals
- counselor referral data
- writing samples
- rubrics
- Reading Renaissance
- Math Renaissance
- Pre/post tests

Benchmark Assessments
Graphic Organizers
Video Projects

PERSONNEL

As professionals, parents and community members we believe that education can be effective for all children. For changes to be meaningful, all staff members of Futral Road Elementary School must be actively committed in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the instructional program, and of school operations. The organizational structure must allow for interaction and communication among faculty and staff members. Selection of staff at Futral Road will include but not be limited to certification standards. In order to insure the safety of our students all employees will be fingerprinted and a criminal background check performed.

Staff

Presently our staff consists of:

- administrator
- assistant administrator
- 32 classroom teachers (All current teachers hold state certification.)
- early intervention program teachers
- interrelated special education teachers
- self-contained special education teachers
- Learning Enhancement Classroom ~~teacher~~ paraeducator
- art teacher
- music teacher
- physical education teacher
- media specialist
- part-time speech teachers
- ESOL teacher (itinerant)
- counselor
- nurse
- 44 13 paraprofessionals

Also, we have additional non-instructional staff, which includes one secretary, one clerk, eight nutrition employees and five custodians.

Based on changes within our organization for learning, our current staff may be reassigned within our Charter School or increased because of, and yet not limited to:

- Reduced class size
- PreK and/or transitional classes
- Enrichment classes
- Remedial and tutorial classes
- Detention and/or learning enhancement classes
- EIP instructors

Scheduling

~~While still in compliance with contract hour mandates, flexible scheduling for staff can be used for instructional nights, evening conferences, teacher collaboration, teacher work days, inclement weather, and at other times when flexibility will be beneficial to students, staff and/or parents.~~

Selection of Personnel

The procedure for selection will follow state and local policy including fingerprinting and criminal record check requirements, except as follows:

The Personnel and Staff Development Design Team will interview and recommend qualified and certified candidates for hiring. This team will make a recommendation to the principal and to the Charter Governance Board. The Charter Governance Board will collaborate with the principal in the recommended hiring of the school's staff. The final recommendation will go to the Superintendent for hiring by the LBOE.

~~A recommendation for selection of administrators will be made to the Leadership Team by the Personnel and Staff Development Design Team representative. The Leadership Team representative will make a recommendation to the Charter Governance Board.~~

A recommendation for selection of principal will be made by a representative committee consisting of the personnel chair, another member of personnel, Governing Board representative, two parent representatives and a central office representative. The final recommendation will go to the Superintendent for hiring by the LBOE.

Training for the Personnel and Staff Development Design Team will be provided by the school system Personnel Director.

Evaluation of Personnel

Formal Evaluations

Our staff will continue to use the GTEP to evaluate the certified teaching staff as required by the local system with one exception. Our staff will have only one option available for the following categories:

Teachers with fewer than three years' experience and teachers new to the school system:

- Two standard, unannounced, GTOI observations by an administrator (first observation prior to November 15),
- One 20-25 minute videotaped lesson shared with a mentor teacher or administrator,
- Evaluation by an administrator on the GTDRI, and

Annual evaluation conference with an administrator to discuss GTEP Annual Evaluation Summary Report.

Teachers with three or more years' experience:

One standard, unannounced GTOI observation by an administrator prior to February 1,

One 20-25 minute videotaped lesson (to be discussed with an administrator; may be part of annual conference),

Evaluation by an administrator on the GTDRI, and

Annual evaluation conference with an administrator to discuss GTEP Annual Evaluation Summary Report.

The administrators will continue to be evaluated under the GLEL. However, each member of the instructional staff will do an additional formal evaluation in order to communicate honestly and effectively. This evaluation will be formulated after research and the Personnel and Staff Development Design Team conducts studies. The formulated evaluation will be sent to the Leadership Team for approval.

Other school staff will be evaluated according to current system-wide evaluation procedures.

Informal Evaluations

In order to improve instructional techniques, we will be researching alternative evaluations such as, but not limited to, professional portfolios, peer collaboration and student/parent evaluations for all school certified staff.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Recognizing that sustained school improvement requires ongoing, quality staff development, the school has included Staff Development/ Critical Study as a part of the Governance Structure. This team will guide staff development activities based on the specific needs of our school community in order to meet the goals and objectives of our School Improvement Plan and to facilitate the changes within our school as a result of our Charter and to meet state certification requirements.

Proposed areas of study as a result of our Charter include, but are not limited to:

- technology training
- multiple intelligences
- effective schools research
- authentic assessment
- alternative assessment
- portfolio assessment for teachers
- administrative evaluation
- scheduling
- multi-age grouping
- looping
- discipline methods
- ~~balanced school year~~

The school's charter will not affect the budget for staff development for Futral Road Elementary School. The Personnel and Staff Development Design Team will coordinate professional growth opportunities and will submit annual budgets and reports to the system Staff Development Coordinator.

FINANCIAL PLAN

The goal of the financial plan is to provide for continued site-based budgeting and ensuring that monies are allocated where they are needed:

- linking the budget to student outcomes, making budgeting program driven
- allowing the redirection of spending priorities so as to provide leverage for fundamental change
- keeping the budgetary process open to all the stakeholders of the school.

~~The Finance Design Team will guide the budgetary process.~~

Futral Road Elementary will comply with the federal monitoring requirements for schools receiving federal funds.

Staff

The staff assigned to Futral Road Elementary School will continue to be compensated with state and local funds at the same rate as other school system employees in the same job.

Additional Personnel

The Charter School has the right to hire employees in collaboration with the LBOE. These individuals will be hired as independent contractors on a temporary basis for instructional and/or non-instructional purposes at the school's expense.

Special Program Staff

OT, PT, school psychologists, speech and gifted services will continue to be provided by the school system.

The school will retain input into the scheduling of special program staff shared with other schools.

Grant funds will be explored to provide additional staff.

After School Program

Futral Road Elementary will operate its After School Program under the auspices of the LBOE and in accordance with system guidelines.

Accounting and Auditing

The current system of auditing procedures used by the Griffin-Spalding County School System for internal and external audits will remain in effect. We will abide by the system's policy of an annual financial audit conducted by the state auditor in accordance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-2065(b)(7). The financial reporting format shall comply with Guidance accompanying this Rule and be in conformity with generally

accepted accounting principals.

Purchase Orders

Purchase orders will be submitted and maintained by the district office as identified in the LBOE policy.

Textbook/Instructional Resource Purchases

The Charter School will have the discretion of using funds allocated for textbooks and supplemental materials that have the highest correlation with the written curriculum and will not be limited to purchasing items only appearing on the state-approved textbook list. The Charter School may use these funds to purchase textbooks and/or other non-consumable instructional materials that the Curriculum and Instructional Design Team approves in support of the school's instructional program. The school may elect to purchase textbooks other than the series adopted by the school system.

Additional Funds

Local, state (including lottery funds for special projects) and federal funds will continue to be allocated to our school in the same way as to other schools within the school system. Staff Development funds will be budgeted and expended based on the priorities established by the Staff Development Design Team. We will continue to seek grants that will benefit students, staff, and the stakeholders of Futral Road School.

Sick Leave/Personal Leave

Staff members will continue to earn sick and personal leave as stated in the LBOE policy. Current policies and procedures that relate to the following will remain in effect:

- professional and personal leave approved by principal and/or superintendent
- maintenance of leave records
- salary schedules
- contracts and tenure
- reduction in force
- due process
- grievance procedures and all other rights afforded teachers under Georgia's Fair Dismissal Act.

Payroll Services

All employees of the school will remain employees of the Griffin-Spalding County School System. Payroll services will be continued by the LBOE. The establishment of the Charter School will affect no salaries or benefits.

District Services

The LBOE will continue to provide and direct all district services. Transportation services will be provided by the LBOE and will comply with all applicable laws. All students are eligible for bus transportation except those who do not live in our attendance zone.

School Nutrition Program

The school nutrition program and personnel will continue to be managed by the Director of Food Service for the school system. ~~The Leadership Team will monitor the cafeteria schedule and daily operations.~~

Special Education Funds

These funds will be allocated to our school based on the fall FTE count. The Charter School will continue to have flexibility and input into how the funds are budgeted and spent within program. Futral Road Elementary will work within the framework of the LEA to provide students with state and federally mandated services for students with disabilities.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY

The purpose of the Parent and Community Design Team is to provide input regarding school policies and to promote excellence in education by studying ways parents and the community can assist in increasing student achievement. The team will also work to improve relationships between parents, staff, students, and community, to promote a positive learning atmosphere between home and school, and to assist in communicating the school's mission.

Parent and Community Involvement

The evidence is clear that when parents are involved in their children's education, children do better in school. The education of children is a responsibility that must be shared by the school, parents and community. The old African proverb is true: "It takes a village to raise a child". We believe that every parent has a valuable contribution to make to his/her child's school. By establishing positive relationships throughout the year, keeping lines of communication open, and allowing parents to actively participate in school-wide improvement through shared decision-making, every parent will have the opportunity to support our collaborative effort.

Parent Involvement

Presently, Futral Road parents are actively involved in PTA PTO, fund-raisers, special theme days, Media Festival, Sidewalk Art, reading incentive programs, and book fairs. In addition, plans are being considered to strengthen our parent partnership. They include, but are not limited to:

Providing a ~~Parent Resource Center~~ resources, which would be available to families in need of school supplies and clothing. ~~The Center will also house~~
We will also provide a variety of materials related to discipline, academics, organization skills, study skills, homework and parenting skills,

Providing ~~New Parent Orientation meeting~~ a new student packet at the beginning of each school year to welcome new parents and assist them in this time of transition. It may include but will not be limited to the history of Futral Road School, how the school is organized, how you can get involved as a volunteer, strategies, and successes,

Developing more effective methods of communication between home and school including continued posting and use of the school website,

Continuing support for the mentoring program for students,

~~Developing a school handbook to be provided to all parents at the beginning of the new school year.~~

Addressing risk factors related to school success such as transience and poverty rate,

Supporting and collaborating with the ~~identified PTO volunteer coordinator,~~ to increase meeting attendance.

Introducing cultural diversity, and

Surveying parents and community members for opinions, ideas and concerns.

Community Involvement

At this time our school partners with the community through Partners-in-Education, business-sponsored grants and various donations by local businesses. The school has formal school partnerships with businesses that assist with student recognition programs, Fall Festival, technology, Career Day, Thirteenth Day, and recognition of academic excellence. The school is seeking ways to enhance the interaction of business, schools, churches, or other organizations within our community by:

Looking for effective ways to better involve our community,

Finding ways to involve senior citizens of our community in the life of our children and school.

PLAN FOR COLLABORATION

On-going critical study is required for sustained school improvement, and collaboration among stakeholders is necessary for critical study to be effective. Futral Road School's plan for collaboration has provided and will provide opportunities for involvement for school personnel, parents, students, community stakeholders, school system administrators and the LBOE to participate in our program of school improvement through the governance structure of the charter. Objectives collaboratively developed through the currently chartered Parent Council, parent and community surveys, and involvement of all parties in the Design Teams are addressed within the body of our Charter. Input and involvement from parents and the community have contributed to the development of the school improvement plan. After a positive faculty vote to pursue renewal of the charter, discussion and brainstorming sessions were conducted to review survey and data and to envision the charter of our future. A Charter Steering Committee consisting of parents, community members, business representatives, teachers, and administrators was established to review and coordinate the Charter Renewal Process. Subcommittees were developed and ideas from new educational research, past and current Futral Road data, and brainstorming sessions were incorporated into the new charter document. Please see other sections of the Charter that specifically address parent and community involvement in the development and implementation of the Charter.

The following plan describes our collaborative effort through which our School Improvement Plan and Charter School application have been developed. Futral Road Elementary School will continue this on-going critical study.

**Futral Road Elementary School
Plan for Collaboration**

Task	Target Date	Responsibility	Resources
Ongoing critical study for school improvement: planning, collecting, assessing, researching	Continuous	Charter Governance Board, Teacher Leader Team, Design Teams	Current Charter Study groups Surveys and questionnaires Student achievement data School visits Professional readings Teacher Leader Team Annual Planning Retreat Pilot projects Staff development opportunities
Decision to pursue Charter Renewal	Spring, 2006	All staff	Affirmative staff vote Affirmative parent consensus Charter annual reports and summaries GA Charter survey
Identification of accomplishments, deletions, and new programs and studies for Charter renewal	Spring, 2006	All staff	School Improvement Teams Design Teams Teacher Leader Team Student achievement data
Writing Charter Renewal document, editing, modifying	Summer and Fall, 2006	Staff, parents, community	Faculty meetings, PTO, Design Teams
Input and discussion	Fall, 2006	Staff, parents, community	Faculty meetings PTO, Design Teams ½ Day Staff Development days

2007 Charter

Approval of Charter	Fall, 2006	Staff and parents	Staff vote on proposal – 11/06 Parent vote - 12/06
Approval of Charter	Fall, 2006	LBOE	Griffin-Spalding County BOE
Approval of Charter	Spring, 2007	State BOE	Georgia State BOE
Celebration of continued growth and improvement	Spring, 2007	Entire staff, LBOE, parents, district personnel, partners in education	School wide celebration
Implementation	Spring, 2007	Staff, students, parents, community	Charter
Ongoing critical study for school improvement: planning, collecting, assessing, researching	Continuous	Charter Governance Board, Teacher Leader Team, Design Teams	Charter Study groups Surveys and questionnaires Student achievement data School visits Professional readings Teacher Leader Team Pilot projects Staff development opportunities
Charter duration of 5 years	Ongoing from Spring, 2007 until Spring, 2012	Staff, students, parents, community Charter Governance Board, Teacher Leader Team, Design Teams LBOE	Charter Curriculum Assessment SBOE
Determine charter status	Continuous	Staff, students, parents, community Charter Governance Board, Teacher Leader Team, Design Teams	Charter Learning community surveys State surveys and documentation Assessment data
Renewal process begins Charter steering committee selected	January, 2010	Charter Governance Board, Teacher Leader Team, Design Teams	Charter Charter Schools Act

APPENDIX

Design Team Rotation Schedule

Parent Survey concerning Gifted Cluster Class, Administered Spring 2004, 2005

Charter School Annual Reports

School Performance Data

Futral Road Elementary Daily Schedule and Proposed Calendar

Procedures of the Griffin-Spalding County School System Governing Student Conduct and Discipline

Futral Road Elementary School Partners in Education