Georgia Charter Systems

A Brief Overview of Charter Systems
Charter Schools Division

“We will lead the nation in improving student achievement.”

What are charter schools?

They are public schools of choice

They are publically funded, but organized and governed by a private group of individuals, a private organization, or state and local public entities

They are free from many of the regulations that govern traditional public schools

They involve partnerships with local communities and businesses

“We will lead the nation in improving student achievement.”
What is a charter?

A performance-based contract between a charter school board and its authorizer(s)

It sets forth the agreement under which the charter school is governed

Charter schools are held accountable by the state and local boards of education for upholding the stipulations in their charter

“We will lead the nation in improving student achievement.”

The Basic Bargain

Accountability

Autonomy

“We will lead the nation in improving student achievement.”
Types of charter schools

Conversion Charter School
Start-up Charter School
LEA Sponsored Start-up Charter School
State-Chartered Special School
Commission Charter School
Charter School System

“Conversion Charter School
Definition
• Traditional public school that becomes a charter school
• Gains additional flexibility in exchange for higher levels of accountability

Facts & Features
• 32 conversion charter schools in Georgia
• Strategy for turning around low performing schools

Relative Advantages:
• Student population, building, and operational systems and structures are already in place

“We will lead the nation in improving student achievement.”
**Start-up Charter School**

**Definition**
- Started by private individuals, private organizations, or state and local public entities

**Facts & Features**
- Did not exist prior to the petition
- Most common type of charter school in Georgia (34 schools)

**Relative Advantages**
- Opportunity to build school culture from the ground up

“We will lead the nation in improving student achievement.”

---

**Career Academy**

**Definition**
- Type of LEA-sponsored Charter School
- Partnership between local district, technical college and local businesses

**Facts & Features**
- Focus on preparing students for workforce
- Multiple districts may partner to develop one career academy

**Relative Advantages**
- Increase district graduation rates
- Partnerships with local businesses and communities can increase resources available for students

“We will lead the nation in improving student achievement.”
How can a Career Academy benefit your community?

Students are prepared for college and career
Small learning community environments provide supportive atmospheres
Curriculum is sequenced and integrates academics and career-based learning
Dual credit courses give students the opportunity to earn high school and college credits
Each academy links high school to business, civic community, and higher education
Each academy measures and shows impact on student performance and achievement
Career themes reflect local economy

“We will lead the nation in improving student achievement.”

How can your district benefit from having a charter school?

Provide parents with choices
Increased academic accountability
Turn around failing schools
Increased flexibility can lead to innovative teaching and educational opportunities

“We will lead the nation in improving student achievement.”
Charter System

**Definition**
- A local school system that operates under the terms of a charter

**Facts & Features**
- Charter is a contract between the LEA and the SBOE
- System gains flexibility to innovate in exchange for increased academic accountability
- Emphasis on school-based leadership and decision making

**Relative Advantages**
- Increased school-level autonomy and accountability
- Additional per-pupil funding in QBE

“We will lead the nation in improving student achievement.”

---

**How can a Charter System benefit your community?**

- Increase in school-level governance
- Possible financial savings through flexibility
- Increase academic standards for all schools
- Assist districts with turning around failing schools
- Increase parental involvement in local schools

“We will lead the nation in improving student achievement.”