



Charter System Flexibility in Action

Atlanta Public Schools

Burgess-Peterson Academy: Collaborating to Grow Your Community School (2017-present)

- **The Challenge:** Competition from Other Schools & Dwindling Enrollment (325)
- **The Innovation:** “Go Team,” created a vision statement for the school and five actions that would enable the vision to become a reality.
 - Early Literacy, IB-PYP, Better Outreach to Community
- **Flexibility**
 - Certification
 - Scheduling for Instruction
- **Results:**
 - (2018) Strategic Planner is exemplar for APS, leading the district’s work on Orton-Gillingham strategy, significantly improved literacy outcomes (2019), enrollment increase 25%.
 - (2020) Continue Focus areas. Now Big 3 (Orton-Gillingham Phonics, IB – PYP and Social Emotional Learning)
 - Enrollment projected 600+, Authorized International Bac. PYP World School, CCRPI strong
- **Contact:** DAVID A. WHITE – PRINCIPAL DWHITE@ATLANTA.K12.GA.US
 - <https://www.charter-system.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/APS-David-White-BPA-Charter-System-Chat-Athens-September-2017.pptx>

Baldwin County Schools

Montessori

- **The Challenge:** No educational option is right for every child, every year, so Baldwin County wanted to be able to provide whatever style of education that kids need.
- **Innovation:** Montessori is student-driven education. Montessori is a system of educating children that seeks to develop natural interests and activities rather than the use of formal teaching methods. Baldwin CSD added two state-funded pre-K Montessori classes at the ELC, and two kindergarten/first-grade classes at Lakeview Primary. This effort is solely a BCSD venture and totally separate from the existing Montessori Academy at the ELC in partnership with Georgia College that is tuition-based and in its second year. Only one of five public Montessori Programs in the state of GA and 3 school districts in Georgia. (DeKalb, Savannah-Chatham County, and Baldwin County)
- **LSGT:** The LSGT was involved in the expansion from the Early Learning Center to the two elementary schools.
Flexibility Used: Teachers have waived using the GADOE curriculum and instructional minutes per subject as well as certification requirements.
Results: Students were assessed using the NWEA MAP Assessment and performed just as well if not better than students enrolled in a traditional classroom.
- **Contact:** Contact: Lori Smith, Director of the Early Learning Center, Lori.Smith@Baldwin.k12.ga.us and Tracy Clark, Principal at Lakeview Primary, Tracy.Clark@Baldwin.k12.ga.us
For additional info:
Montessori Partnerships for Georgia: Annie Frazer, Exec Director annie@montessori-partnerships.org (404)228 6326
- <https://www.13wmaz.com/article/news/local/montessori-academy-to-expand-in-baldwin-county/93-497054654>

Barrow County Schools

Barrow BOLD Disruptive Innovations

- **The Challenge:** How to use disruptive innovations that are based on sound educational action research, job-embedded profess learning, and increased stakeholder engagement to ensure all students receive an exceptional education. Building Our Learning Differently (BOLD)!
- **BOLD Innovation 1:** Established system-level job descriptions and external partnerships with uniquely defined duties and responsibilities to provide the necessary leadership and support to meet above challenge. (Director of Innovative Learning, Innovation Support Administrator, Digital Media Producer, and extensive MOU with prof learning org, ArtsNow.
- **BOLD Innovation 2:** Repurposed unused MS campus as Center for Innovative Teaching (CFIT). Prof Dev hub and system-wide dissemination, space for innovative partners, Arts & Innovation Magnet Program for 6-8, higher Ed research projects, hosts BOLDTV education access channel with local cable provider, large scale system-wide and community engagement.
- **Flexibility Used:** Charter Funds used to sustain innovative positions and partnerships. Otherwise, unable to financially support.
- **Results:**
 - Participation in job-embedded profess learning specific to Arts-integration and project-based learning greatly increased system-wide
 - Increased system-wide teacher access to and engagement with members of institutes of higher Education
 - The number of students and teachers engaged in system-wide STEM, STEAM, and Project-Based Learning showcases and competitions is trending upwards. CFIT Piloted innovative learning spaces such as black box theatres, school gardens, makerspaces, and digital music labs are now being introduced on other campuses
 - Stakeholder engagement and awareness of innovative and educational programs has increased greatly.
 - Student and teacher access to safe and effective educational technology resources, as well as the correlated professional development support, is pervasive across the system.
- **Contact:** Lee Bane, Director Innovative Learning, lee.bane@barrow.k12.ga.us

Barrow County Schools

Sims Academy Dual Enrollment

- **Challenge:** Continue to foster external partnerships and create innovative opportunities for students.
- **Innovation:** BCSS, Sims Academy, and Lanier Technical College welcomed their first two cohorts of dual enrollment students in welding and auto. These students began in the spring of 2021 and will progress through the program together earning two technical certificates of credit from Lanier Technical College. They may continue to earn additional certifications and credentials.
 - Automotive students will earn Auto Electrical Technician and Auto Engine Performance certifications.
 - Welding students will earn Basic Shielded Metal Arc Welder and Gas Metal Arc Welder certifications by the end of fall semester 2021. While dual enrollment pays for tuition and books, it does not cover the cost of required equipment. Kubota, a Sims Business Partner and member of the Sims Board of Directors, donated equipment to remove that barrier to participation.
 - Lanier Technical College will offer core academic courses on the Sims Academy campus beginning fall 2021. These core academics are offered on the BCSS bell schedule and follow the BCSS academic calendar rather than the college calendar. Students will have access to tutoring on days their classes do not meet and can participate in enrichment courses on days the college is not open. Courses are in English, math, biology, history, economics, political science, psychology, sociology, and speech (public speaking).
- **LSGT:**

The Sims Academy Board of Directors has been *heavily* involved in determining the direction for our campus in terms of dual enrollment. In fact, when we sought to create a welding cohort for students to earn 3 welding certificates from LTC in just two semesters - we realized that cost was a barrier. Many of the students who needed this program the most were unable to buy the \$500 worth of supplies that were required. One of our board members, who also works at Kubota, organized for \$300 of the \$500 to be covered through a donation

from his company. We were able to come up with the remaining \$200. That partnership has grown and now Caterpillar, also a business partner, is doing the same thing on a *second* cohort.

In summary, the Sims BOD provides input and oversight. They tell us what programs we need to implement to economically, and we make it happen. We are a service to the community.

- **Flexibility Used:**

- Scheduling
- May use Certification –
 - There is a struggle for K-12 school systems and colleges to find highly qualified teachers and instructors. For that reason, we and Lanier Technical College collaborate to find the best possible situation for teaching courses - depending on both of our staffing situations. For example, we have a strong ELA and Math teacher who have the graduate credit hours to get credentialed for college courses. They are teaching the courses for both LTC and BCSS in this case. We have also done this with Mechatronics in the past.
 - When LTC instructors have ready access to strong instructors, they may teach the course - on their campus or ours depending on which building has adequate classroom/lab space.

<https://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/schools/sims-academy/programs/automotive>

<https://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/schools/sims-academy/programs/academic-courses>

<https://www.barrow.k12.ga.us/schools/basa/news/1702486/first-sims-academy-dual-enrollment-welding-cohort>

- **Contact:** Lee Bane, Director Innovative Learning, lee.bane@barrow.k12.ga.us

Barrow County Schools

Sims Academy Dual Enrollment – Updated 2022

- **Challenge:** Need to create an innovative and collaborative dual enrollment partnership with Lanier Technical College.
- **Innovation:** Lanier Technical College (LTC) - Barrow Campus, and the BCSS Sims Academy are co-located on a shared Workforce Development Campus. This provides Dual Enrollment Results in four key areas:
 - Core Academics
 - Lanier Technical College offers core academic courses in Sims Academy Building.
 - Classes follow the Barrow bell schedule and calendar.
 - Tutoring at Sims Academy ensures student success and protects student GPAs.
 - Students may also enroll in upper-level college courses on Campus or online.
 - Career-Technical Education
 - High school students may enroll in career-technical programs as cohorts to earn TCCs. Including:
 - Welding and Joining Technology: Basic Shielded Metal Arc Welder, Gas Metal Arc Welder*
 - Automotive Technology: Auto Electrical Technician, Auto Engine Performance*
 - Early Childhood Care and Education: Child Development Specialist and ECCE Basics*
 - Culinary Arts: Prep Cook Certificate
 - Nurse Aide: Nurse Aide
 - *Option B Graduation eligible
 - Industry & Higher Education Partnerships
 - Provide equipment, supplies, classroom support, and work experience to cohort members: Kubota, Caterpillar, Akins Ford, Piedmont College (Athens Campus), NE Georgia Health Systems
 - Piedmont College-Athens , offers Early Childhood Care & Education students opportunity to transfer with an AA Science degree directly into Elementary Education BA program.
 - Students may participate in WBL to extend career prep beyond earning Technical Certificates of Credit.
 - Educational Enrichment
 - All Sims Academy Early College Dual Enrollment students have access to:
 - College visits, Industry tours, Guest presenters, Student Success Presentation prior to semester start, Optional seminars for success throughout the semester (Study Skills, Debt Free Degree, Mock Interviews)

Contact: Lee Bane; lee.bane@barrow.k12.ga.us

Ben Hill County Schools

- **The Challenge:** Ben Hill Charter System was a failing school system in 2016 with more than 75% of our overall students 1-3 years behind academically. Financial deficit of \$1M in general budget. No data existed to support quality Tier 1 instruction. Less than 20% one-to-one devices in schools. Fitzgerald HS had a dropout rate of almost 60 students per year and less than 15% of students were attending any 2- or 4-year college.
- **The Innovation(s):**
 - Development of high functioning PLC's and an effective RTI process.
 - Began to use MAP to target and measure student growth.
 - Using MAP, began to develop a sound RTI process and place students in appropriate tiers of intervention.
 - Developed individual student portfolios for all students.
 - Modified curriculum and instruction followed
 - Effective PLC practices were implemented
 - The need for more specific data resulted in the creation of Common Formative Assessments and then led us to Navvy. These assessments, along with proficiency scales, drives RTI, classroom interventions, and acceleration.
 - Implemented a Wall-to-Wall College and Career Academy at FHSCCA.
- **LSGT:** School Governance Teams-were a major component of the Strategic Planning Process providing leadership and support for these innovational practices and consolidation of funds for all schools.
- **Flexibility:**
 - Consolidation of Funds
 - Used flexibility and consolidation of funds to move away from traditional Title 1 teachers and have just a teacher or a position and then implemented those people that were experts into those new RTI, PLC, and Special Education positions. We used our flexibility to modify the schedule to be able to offer the K-5 specific grade level people in RTI and PLC positions 2 planning periods.
 - Used State approved program flexibility to modify handbooks (RTI handbook K-12, PLC Handbook K-12, Gifted handbook K-12, Social and Emotional Behavioral handbook K-12, Proficiency Scales K-12, One to One technology for all K-12 teachers and students) and instructional practices (move to tier 1 instructional technology for all). This also allowed us to use flexible assessments, programs, progress monitoring, and innovative teaching strategies to meet all students' academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs on an individual basis. We specifically used our Charter Flexibility and Consolidated Funds to design our Strategic Plan which in turn drives all school improvement plans. However, we used the new flexible funding model to give all the schools their money at the beginning of each year and they decide how to spend it in their SIP.
 - Used Flexibility to redesign the State Standards and develop our own power standards in each grade level that are directly tied to Proficiency Scales to accelerate or remediate the Standard as needed through the Tier Instructional Process. (This flexibility allows for students to receive above grade level standards as determined by mastery of the standard or below grade level standards by non-mastery of the standard) Ex: If you were in 1st grade you would go to 2nd grade for math or vice versa or go to another teachers class room on your grade level that accelerates math) The Standards Based report card reflects that Standard that the child is mastering at any level. This is progress monitored using NAVVY and other informal and formal assessments daily, weekly, and monthly.
- **Results:**
 - Over 88% of our students are dual enrolled.
 - FHSCCA has dropped the drop-out rate to less than 6 students. FHSCCA graduation rate was a true 96%.
 - 3 schools named REWARD Schools for Growth.
 - 4 million dollars now in General Fund.
 - 100% One-to-One devices for students and teachers.
 - Maximized FTE funding using PLC and RTI processes in place. PLC's determine individual instructional plans in the RTI process by each standard for each student for both remediation and acceleration that are progress monitored by using multiple means of assessments data that are stored in the individual student portfolio. This allows the tracking of every segment served on a per pupil basis in the tier process for EIP and Gifted students = Maximum FTE Funding
- **CONTACT:** Dawn Clements, dawn.clements@benhillschools.org

Calhoun City Schools

Urgent Care Clinic

- **Challenge:** Continued focus on student well-being
- **Innovation:** Partner with AdventHealth, Gordon to open a health clinic on middle/high campus. The partnership will serve CCS students, staff and families and local community. Provides a learning environment for the healthcare students at the Calhoun College & Career Academy.
- **LSGT Involvement:** Decision making process re: allocating time and use of grant funding.
- **Flexibility Used:** Optimized community partnerships to leverage funding of various grants/foundations. Flexible scheduling for students to support the clinic in healthcare pathway. The hospital uses flexibility waiving specific requirements traditionally in place to allow students to work on-site.
- **Results:** Opened 6/15/20. Fully operational. Since opening, the AdventHealth Urgent Care at Calhoun City Schools has completed over 800 free sport physicals to student athletes, 300 biometric screenings to Calhoun City Schools employees, completed 3,664 patient visits, and performed 1,466 COVID tests.
- <https://www.calhounschoools.org/high/about-chs/adventhealth-medical-group-urgent-care>
- **Contact:** Michele Taylor, Superintendent: taylor@m@calhounschoools.org

Calhoun City Schools

Doctor for a Day

On Monday, January 8, six remarkable CCS students embarked on an extraordinary journey into the world of healthcare. This experience was seamlessly integrated with Calhoun City Schools' "Heroes" theme. CCS Superintendent Dr. Michele Taylor guided the field trip that allowed students, to gain firsthand insights into healthcare within our community. The goal was to expose students to the vast array of healthcare careers and the numerous opportunities within the medical field.

Their day began with an enlightening visit to Calhoun High School's CTAE Healthcare labs, where they had the privilege of interacting with instructors Lori Fisher and Phillip Parker. These educators generously shared their career journeys, providing valuable insights into the healthcare field and the opportunities at CHS.

Following this immersive experience, our aspiring 'Doctors for a Day' had the incredible opportunity to meet with one of AdventHealth's orthopedic surgeons, Dr. Stephen King, a prominent figure in the field of orthopedics and one of our very own Board of Education members. The students engaged in enlightening conversations and enjoyed an exclusive clinic tour. They even had firsthand experience with a cast application, adding a hands-on element to their day. Moreover, they discussed education and career prospects with the dedicated CCS board member over lunch. Dr. King shared his journey to becoming an orthopedic surgeon and encouraged each of them to follow their passions. The youngest doctor in training, first grader Blair Holland said, "This was the best day ever!"

AdventHealth's Tracy Farriba later took the reins to guide the students through the hospital's emergency room, trauma rooms, and the baby place to get a firsthand look at the innovative facilities offered to our community.

Calhoun City Schools appreciates the partnership with AdventHealth Gordon. As we move forward, Calhoun City Schools remains steadfast in its commitment to inspire all students to become lifelong learners in the pursuit of excellence.

Calhoun City Schools

Captures Kids' Hearts – Social Emotional Well-Being

- **The Challenge:** Calhoun City Schools wanted to continue to provide classroom and school environments to inspire all students to be lifelong learners in the pursuit of excellence... to win their hearts and to lead them to their personal best.
- **The Innovation** - Focus on school climate and culture to build stronger relationships with teachers, students and families. Social Emotional Learning.
- **LSGT involvement:** School Governance Teams supported the use of consolidated funds to support the initiative.
- **Flexibility Used: Consolidation of Funds-** local, state, and federal funds were used to support the initiative to pay for professional learning and support of Teacher / Leader Development Specialist
- **Results:**
 - Improved behavior and attendance have resulted. More students are engaged in extracurricular opportunities.
- **Contact:** Michele Taylor, Superintendent: taylor@m@calhounschoools.org

Calhoun City Schools

Jacket Junction Mobile Learning Lab – Crayons to Careers

- **Challenge:** Students were not ready for pre-K and lacked simple vocabulary and readiness skills.
- **Innovation:**
 - Utilize student instructors from Calhoun's College and Career Academy Teaching as a Pathway and Early Childhood Pathway to provide individual / small group interaction with children 6 months to four years.
 - Engages parents and children in the learning process
 - Travel to local housing authority properties and a local daycare partner.
- **LSGT Involvement:** The LSGT approved use of Charter System funds to support this initiative AND the initiative and curriculum delivery for ECE pathway.
- **Flexibility:** Seat Time, Scheduling/Time, Delivery of Curriculum, Partnerships
- **Results:**
 - CCA students in the ECE and Teaching as a Profession Pathway have gained valuable experiences in setting up classroom centers and lesson planning. They see firsthand some of the challenges children have prior to coming to PreK and/or kindergarten.
 - Regular attendees are benefitting from interactions and skills development. Pre/post assessments show improved readiness skills Data collection is on-going.
- **Contact:** Michele Taylor, Superintendent: taylor@m@calhounschoools.org

Calhoun City Schools & The University of West Georgia Host Innovation Conference

CCS launches innovation labs across district as school system partners with UWG to explore STEM initiatives

Calhoun City Schools consistently strives to inspire all students to become lifelong learners in the pursuit of excellence. Although the needs of the workforce are ever changing, CCS recognizes that certain characteristics are constant as we develop the next generation of learners. Creativity, innovation, and collaboration are three core traits that are essential to the success of an individual entering the workplace. In an effort to cultivate these attributes, Calhoun City Schools has partnered with the University of West Georgia to create innovative hubs within each of their schools. These media, college, & career centers are the cross section of STEM, Innovation, and Makerspace initiatives, focused on providing an environment where learning becomes relevant through exposure to resources once unknown.

Calhoun City Schools engaged the University of West Georgia to host a launch conference in which UWG instructors led professional development mini-sessions centered around the new technologies purchased by the system. These sessions included: Virtual/Augmented Reality; Makerspace; Robotics & Coding; Game-Based Learning; Immersive Simulations; Social-Emotional Learning; Legos; & the Innovations Mobile Lab. All CCS educators had the opportunity to engage in hands-on learning through this immersive experience.

Special guests were on-hand including: Wolfie, the UWG mascot; Dr. Mike Dishman, the Dean of the College of Education; and various department chairs from UWG.

Also in attendance were district and school-based leadership, actively participating in the learning experience. Superintendent, Dr. Michele Taylor, shared, "It is a wonderful thing when we see organizations such as UWG come to the aid of public schools in the PK-12 arena. STEM initiatives can be daunting; however, with the help of UWG, we are embracing these new technologies and learning how to use them in the classrooms across the district".

Students in grades PK-12 are now afforded the opportunity to engage in augmented/virtual reality experiences, participate in the design process, and expand their horizons through creative discovery. In addition to their support with STEM initiatives, UWG has also engaged CCS in the support of teaching as a profession and early childhood education pathways. They plan to provide training in the development of social and emotional learning kits in addition to providing immersive learning opportunities for students in these pathways as we grow the next generation of learners. Professional development will continue to be provided to all instructional staff in order to support the use of these new technologies throughout the school and across all disciplines. It is the system's belief that to inspire the next generation of learners, students must be moved from crayons to careers with the tools necessary to excel beyond the graduation line. #crayonstocareers

Candler County Schools

Using Community Experts to Teach a Variety of High Interest Classes

- **Innovation:** Hire local “not certified or qualified” experts to teach certain high interest classes
 - And enable students and community to both benefit.
- **Flexibility** - Certification
- **Results:**
 - Significant savings of funds
 - Students now have access to art, music, chorus, dance, computer repair and video production classes.
 - This has expanded to “Growing Our Own Teachers” with Seniors as paid TA’s in the elementary schools.
- **Charter funds:** Seeded computer kits and are used to pay for student services.
- **Contact** - Dr. Bubba Longgrear, Superintendent blonggrear@metter.org
 - <https://youtu.be/f3JR0AoDGXY>

Carrollton City Schools

Charter Innovation

- **Challenge:** Providing the highest quality educational experience for a widely diverse population that promotes opportunities for success.
- **Innovation:** Customization- Providing opportunities to meet the unique needs of students who are academically aggressive, have academic need or desire exposure to new learning opportunities
- **Flexibility:** Service models, graduation requirements, organization of schools, middle school programs, schedule, innovative instructional model, class-size, certification requirements, school day and year for students, salary schedule requirement
- **LSGT Involvement:** Part of strategic planning process, seeking input from the community and sharing feedback from the school system to the community
- **Results:**
 - 1st/2nd Grade transition classes, CES Academies, Accelerated math program (6-8), Vertical alignment from K-12 across content areas and program offerings in STEM and Performing Arts, Data Rooms in schools, Instructional Coaches, Interventionists, Ra-lin Construction Pathway, Six Hybrid classes offered at CHS, Improved student achievement:
 - Reading on grade level and above- Outperformed the state in grades 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8
 - English Language Arts- Outperformed the state in grades 3 (by 10%), 4, 6, 7, and 8 (by 9%) and in American Literature in Developing level and above; Outperformed the state in ALL grade levels in Proficient and Distinguished levels
 - Math- Outperformed the state in ALL grade levels and Algebra I in Developing and above; Outperformed the state in ALL grade levels in Proficient and Distinguished levels

Carrollton City Schools

STREAM Initiative-A Partnership for Learning

- **Innovation:** Carrollton City Schools takes full advantage of Buffalo Creek which flows the entire length of the campus. Innovation moves the classroom into the creek to make science, technology, reading, engineering, arts and math (STREAM) come to life for students.
- **Flexibility & Results:** These real world, project-based learning experiences driven by the support of C.S. Britton, Inc. and Wildland Hydrology has united city government, engineers, business partners, the University of West Georgia and a partner school in Hunting Valley, OH in an endeavor to better understand natural channel design and the impacts of community development.
 - Key Components
 - K-12 Vertical Alignment
 - Internships
 - Externships
 - Collaboration with the University of West Georgia
 - Experts in the Field

Catoosa County Public Schools

“Catoosa U”

- **Challenge:** Providing real-world work experience, high school credit, students paid for internships
- **Innovation:** Catoosa U Under direction/supervision of Department that “hired” them vs. WBL or YAP coordinator (still receive WBL/YAP course credit)
 - Technology interns report to Director of Technology, receive daily assignments from school’s Media Spec and Tech Specialist
 - Opportunity for students to earn Hewlett Packard certification Tech Repair
 - Potential Future Internships
- **Results:**
 - Potential Future Internships: Education, Agri-science, Broadcast Journalism and Nursing.
 - Earned respect and support of business community – CCA in process and fully operational within next 2 years.
 - Awarded \$3M grant from TCSG 2019.
 - Real increase in the number of students exploring IT beyond high school
 - Number of earned certifications: 7
- **Flexibility:**
 - Certification (O.C.G.A. 20-2-200)
 - State Board Rules 10-4-3-.13 Youth Apprenticeship Programs and 160-4-3-.14 Work Based Learning Program
- **Contact:** Steve Sawyer, Director of Technology, ssawyer@catoosa.k12.ga.us

Catoosa County Public Schools

“From HERE to CAREER 9th grade class”

- **Challenge:** Students were taking the YouScience Assessment in different classes in high school; however, little time helping them understand their results. Determined need to engage students in a meaningful way to better understand their aptitude, interests, and “best-fit” careers to develop a high school and post-secondary graduation plan.
- **Innovation:** Creation of required 9th grade class to include career counseling using the YouScience assessment and Leadership Development using Tim Elmore’s Habitudes. Additionally, the Georgia Best curriculum was rearranged to support the lessons in Habitudes and to unpack YouScience results in a more strategic process.
 - Counselors and From Here to Career teachers collaboratively align topics and lessons with CTAE Standard # 1, YouScience results, and Georgia Best topics.
 - Counselors attend the FHTC class 1 day a week for career counseling based on their YouScience results.
 - Each Monday, students participate in a Habitudes Lesson which enforces career readiness and leadership skills.
 - Each Friday, teachers and students work in the Georgia Best portal which complements the weekly Habitude.
 - Students revisit You Science results in Economics class in Personal Finance unit and in Professional Skills Dev Class at Catoosa’s CCA.
 - Students receive credit for the Workforce Ready Pathway Course 32.4300 in this 9th grade class. Students who attend the CCA complete the final two courses (32.43100 and 32.43200) in Professional Skills Development if they attend the CCA for two years.
 - Seniors update their Post-Secondary Plan during Senior Seminar which occurs 3 times during the school year.
- **Flexibility:** Scheduling, seat-time requirements, teacher certification requirements, and course standard requirements.
- **Results:**
 - Students earn a Credential of Value when they complete the Georgia Best sessions.
 - Students develop a IGP (Individual Graduation Plan) and a Postsecondary Plan based on the results from YouScience, Career Counseling, Habitudes, and Ga Best.

- Students better understand what career pathways to select when planning their schedules and if they are a candidate for the College and Career Academy.
- Students research their top 3 careers based on their aptitudes and interests identified in YouScience. This also fulfills the Bridge Bill requirements.
- Students prepare a portfolio which includes: YouScience results, Habitudes reflections, Ga Best Certificate, a plan for graduation including career pathway(s) selections, a resume, cover letters, and a post-secondary plan (college, technical school, military, apprenticeship, and/or workforce).
- **Funding:** State and local funds.
- **Contact:** Mark Pierce, CCA Principal, mpierce@catoosa.k12.ga.us

Chattahoochee County Schools

Meeting the Needs of High Mobility Student Population

- **The Challenge:** A highly transient, military population resulted in a high percentage of students entering and exiting the school district with missing grades and/or credits.
- **Innovation:** Utilize flexibility in allowing a student to demonstrate mastery of the content and/or not be penalized for time not present due to military obligations
- **Flexibility Used:** Used flexibility and waived the school day and approved courses requirements of OCG160-5-1.02 School Day & School Year and 160-4-2.03 List of State-Funded K-8 Subjects and 9-12 Courses for Students Entering Ninth Grade
- **SGT Involvement:** Additionally, after receiving feedback from the SGT regarding the transient nature of students and the inability to always complete 3 separate courses for a pathway/JROTC, the district waived 160-4-2.48 in awarding PE credit and used JROTC as an option for students even if enrolled only for the year.
- **Results:**
 - Increased the graduation rate from 79.2 (2018) to 93.6 (2021), but over 88% of students graduate with a minimum of one college credit.
 - By meeting the unique needs of military students, all three schools (elementary, middle, and high) have been recognized as Military Flagship Schools for Georgia. Chattahoochee County is the first and only district to have schools at all three grade bands to be recognized as Military Flagship.
 - Using flexibility to meet the needs of those who serve our country, the military enrollment for CCSD has increased to over 65% of students being military-connected which has resulted in an increase of nearly 250 students since 2019.

Chattahoochee County Schools

- **Challenge:** to eradicate the "million-word gap" often found in young children who experience poverty, a significant challenge was bridging the home-to-school literacy gap for our most at-risk students during the early education years.
- **Innovation:** In partnership with community organizations, the school district hosted a 5-week summer literacy camp expanding access to the science of reading instruction. The innovative solution included a parent partnership participation in which campers attended alongside parents/caregivers. These parents as partners received literacy training on using home activities as well as evening training sessions. Parents documented the work in the home by uploading photos on a private group social media platform and were able to learn from each other as well as celebrate each other's accomplishments while building a community of learners together. This parent "professional learning community" developed skills in questioning, vocabulary development, and phonemic awareness. Parents who successfully met the requirements were awarded a "back to school" incentive to support their children.
- **Flexibility Used:** Use of Funds; School Council; Instructional Materials
- **SGT involvement:** The concept of the Literacy Camp, "Pouncing into Proficiency" was recommended after discussing the trends in the literacy data. Members of the SGT encouraged charter funding to be used to support literacy camps and suggested that a more home-friendly resource be provided to families (as opposed to the scope and sequence of the adopted curriculum program). The extension of a home-friendly resource that aligned to the science of reading and supported the adopted curriculum was purchased.
- **Results:** 100% of students who registered for the literacy camp had perfect attendance. 100% of students of registered campers completed all camp requirements to include 3 independent read-aloud on a text at the student's instructional level as well as a minimum of 80% on two comprehension formative assessments. 85% of families completed all five home activities.

Chattahoochee County Schools

- **Challenge:** With 65% of the secondary students as military-connected, the student population is extremely transient. Because of this transient nature, many 6th-8th grade students transition into the school at critical instructional times often creating a situation in which a student is significantly ahead of the scope and sequence identified in the Ga Standards of Excellence for a grade level. Because these students may only be with the district for a few months, our desire is to meet them where they are and allow them to flourish.
- **Innovation:** Middle School Students whose formative assessment indicates significantly high levels of achievement in core content (math, Rdg) are allowed to cross grade levels to ensure continual learning is present. These students are met where they are and allowed to move ahead in the curriculum.
- **Flexibility Used:** Seat time, transfer students,
- **Results:** The number of middle school students reaching Level 4 (exceeds) has experienced a nearly 12% increase since 2021. More than 75% of rising 9th graders have earned at least one high school credit.

Clarke County Schools

Hilsman Health Center

- **Challenge:** In an increasingly complex and fragmented healthcare system, there is the need to provide access to quality healthcare for students. Using data from the Clarke County School District (CCSD) and the Athens Wellbeing project, Hilsman Middle School (HMS) was noted to have significantly higher rates of absenteeism and tardiness among staff and students. The school and surrounding area, was also found to have the most uninsured/underinsured and the most financially fragile population in the Athens area. There existed an opportunity and a challenge to help reduce barriers to healthcare access such as transportation, cost, inconvenience, and trust/confidentiality concerns.
- **Innovation:** During the county's plans for remodeling and expansion of Hilsman Middle School, the idea of the schoolbased clinic was birthed. CCSD, in partnership with Piedmont Athens Regional Hospital and The Athens Neighborhood Health Center, developed the Hilsman Health Center. The Hilsman Health Center (HHC) is a fully functioning school-based clinic providing primary and urgent care needs for the faculty, staff and students of Hilsman Middle School and the rest of the school district.
- **Flexibility:** Charter system flexibility allowed the district to waive, alter or reexamine some of the Title 20 rules and regulations in efforts to mitigate the challenge presented. Because of the flexibility allowed to CCSD, there was room to implement innovations such as the HHC that would best help our system improve student attendance and achievement rates.
 - GA Code § 20-2-770 (2020) promulgates nutritional screening and eye, ear, and dental examinations for students that are to be performed by practitioners. The Hilsman Health Center is able to fulfill this need by performing such exams on campus and increasing access to care will decreasing barriers simultaneously.
 - GA Code § 20-2-771.2 (2020) establishes rules for school nursing posts in schools. The Hilsman Health Center is able to circumvent some of the elements of that code with advanced practice providers. This helps to alleviate some of the burden of the school nurses.
- **Commitment:** Input from the HMS Local School Governance Team was crucial as well as that of the district, local healthcare providers, and other stakeholders. When Covid-19 hit just months after the HHC opened, it was through district wide support and community involvement that the clinic remained opened, shifted its model, and not only focused on primary care but also served as an onsite Covid-19 command center of sorts.
- **Achievement:** The school district has witnessed increased attendance for teachers and students at HMS. Students and staff lose less workdays for illnesses as they do not have to wait for appointments, travel off campus, or remain home for illnesses that are not deemed contagious in nature. The model of the HHC has sparked attention from other schools in the district and the local medical partnership with plans for a similar clinic at a middle school on the other side of town. These school-based clinics are the work of persistent parents, productive planning, proper partnerships, and the desire for student success.
- **Contact:**
 - James Barlament; Executive Director of Innovation, Strategy, and Governance 706-546-7721 / Ext. 79540
 - Stephen Nobles; Governance & Flexibility Specialist 706-546-7721 / Ext. 79409

Clarke County Schools

Barnett Shoals Elementary “Where Scholars Become Legends” Leader in Me at BSE!

- **Challenge(s):** Results from 2020 school-based Climate Survey found a decrease in the number of students “feeling valuable” and “trying hard/focusing” from 2019. Found teachers lacked capacity to effectively teach prosocial skills and behaviors, and promote intrinsic motivation for all students.
 - There was a need for a whole-school improvement model using teaching practices to promote social and emotional learning for students and focuses on teaching school-wide expectations.
- **Innovation:** Adopt a school-wide approach through Franklin Covey’s Leader in Me.
- **LSGT Involvement:** After several meetings with reps from Franklin Covey, the team voted to use grant funds to support this initiative. A sub-committee was established.
 - The Leader in Me(LiM) committee worked alongside school personnel to plan and implement the roll-out. Members were invited to attend the core training with staff.
 - Currently, the LiM committee is working to involve families to utilize LiM at home to bridge between home and school.
 - ***Committed to continue***
- **Results:**
 - After 2 years of implementation, the school has seen a shift in the overall culture of the school.
 - Students are now willing and able to process the perspectives of others in times of disagreement, increasing empathy amongst all stakeholders.
 - This increase in empathy has enabled students to be more comfortable being vulnerable when setting and working towards meeting their personal and academic goals.
 - Adults in students’ lives have mentioned how this vulnerability has also created a shift in the life of the child, providing tools they need to prioritize tasks, allowing them to take on more ownership of their own learning and their personal lives outside of school.
- **Charter Funds:**
 - Funds were used to pay for consulting provided by Franklin Covey, teacher guides, and student resources in order to implement the Covey, teacher guides, and student resources in order to implement the program with fidelity
- **Contact:**
 - James Barlament; Executive Director of Innovation, Strategy, and Governance 706-546-7721 / Ext. 79540
 - Stephen Nobles; Governance & Flexibility Specialist 706-546-7721 / Ext. 79409

Dawson County Schools

Realignment of Grades 6-12

- **Challenge:** Dawson County Schools had two very small middle schools that fed into a single high school. Needed to better utilize personnel/human resources to increase accelerated course offerings to challenge most capable 8th gr. students AND create opportunities for their most fragile 8th graders to get a head start on graduation by earning high school credit early. Meeting both these needs would lead to higher graduation rates and students being better prepared for college and careers.
- **The Innovation:** The realignment occurred in two phases. Fall 2016, all 6th and 7th graders placed together in one of the existing middle schools. The other middle school became Dawson County Junior High and served only 8th grade students during Phase I. Phase II Fall of 2017, ninth grade students moved to the junior high. Upon completion, the middle school serves grades 6/7. Dawson County Junior High now serves grades 8/9. Grades 10-12 make up the high school.
- **LSGT:** Was used extensively throughout both phases of the realignment. Many meetings were held with Local School Governance Teams to gather input and plan for each step of the process. The decision to do a two-year phase in plan was based on the recommendation of the governance teams.
- **Flexibility Used:** The district waived the middle school program criteria to accomplish the realignment of grades 6-12. (160-4-2-.05 MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM CRITERIA)
- **Results:**
- Having students grouped by these age levels has provided positive social benefits to students which **impacts school climate.**

- The district has increased the number of opportunities for 8th grade students to take accelerated classes and earn high school credits in both academic and elective courses.
- The district has achieved a three-year average graduation rate of 95%.
- **Contact:** Dr. Damon Gibbs, Superintendent of Schools www.dawsoncountyschools.org 706-265-1226

Dawson County Schools

- **Charter Mini Grants for Innovation and Creativity**
- **Challenge:** Dawson County Schools has a strong desire to expand CTAE and Fine Arts in its elementary schools and to increase innovations and opportunities for all students.
- **Innovation:** Provide schools and teachers an opportunity to participate in a competitive grant process to earn funds for innovation and creativity.
- **School Governance Teams:** School Governance Teams evaluate and approve the charter mini grants at the school level before they are submitted to the district.
- **Results:**
 - A large amount of the district's charter funds are put directly back into the hands of schools and teachers as a part of the grant process.
 - Increased innovations and opportunities for students such as:
 - Creation of The Little Tiger Theater Company
 - Ag Day
 - Engineering/robotic labs
 - Book Vending for literacy
 - Outside Tranquility Classroom
 - Virtual Reality Labs in Elementary
 - Video Broadcasting Labs
 - Student designed and ran Tiger Thread Store
- **Contact:** Mrs. Nicole LeCave, Superintendent
 - www.dawsoncountyschools.org
 - nlecave@dawson.k12.ga.us

Dublin City Schools

Option B Diploma Program

- **Challenge:** How to give students the flexibility necessary to pursue postsecondary education and career options.
- **Innovations:**
 - Accelerating student learning by offering summer semester courses across a swath of required 9 HS courses
 - Using charter flexibility with high school scheduling, enabling students to start technical classes as early as 10th grade
 - Partnering with Oconee Fall Line Technical College to offer Option B courses through partnership agreement with our Career Academy
 - Addition of Mechatronics to approved Option B pathway allows DCS to serve local industry need by aligning curriculum to apprenticeships with local international manufacturers
- **Contact:** Dr. Fred Williams, Superintendent fred.williams@dcsirish.com

Dublin City Schools

Summer Courses Ahead of the Curve on Option B Diploma

- **Challenge:** How to give students the flexibility necessary to pursue postsecondary education and career options.
- **Innovation:**
 - Accelerating student learning at their own pace by offering summer semester courses in a variety of subjects, including Health and Consumer Food Sciences, three years ago.
 - The goal has been to expand summer course credit offerings prior to the adoption of Senate Bill 2, to give students the flexibility necessary to pursue postsecondary education and career options.
 - This aligns with Option B's purpose of helping students attain the necessary core subject requirements over a shorter period while they secure technical college certifications.

- Dublin City is participating in a series of workshops with districts across the state to develop and share ideas about marketing/scheduling/funding of Option B to help students best utilize the new platform.
- In the beginning stages of establishing cohorts of Dublin MS interested students and parents.
- Partnering with Oconee Fall Line Technical College to expand potential Option B offerings as more programs are added to the TCSG state-wide accepted list.
- **Flexibility:**
 - Examining options for individualizing the schedules of high school students so taking technical courses as early as 10th grade is possible. The district's charter status allows such flexibility.
- **Results:**
 - Applications in August 2021. Applicants will be selected in September followed by the interview process. The VA is finalizing the plans for the interviews. (Earlier timing in 2022)
 - Applied for the Youth Apprenticeship Grant this year. This allows students to receive a course credit through Work Based Learning.
 - **LSGT involvement:**
 - The Guidelines and plans for the Workforce Academy were developed collaboratively with the Carl Vinson VA Medical Center Staff, the Dublin-Laurens Economic Development Authority, and the **Dublin HS LSGT**.
 - Will continue to work with Carl Vinson VAMC to articulate workforce needs and academy offerings into specific pathways for high school course credit.
- **Contact:** Dr. Fred Williams, Superintendent fred.williams@dcsirish.com

Dublin City Schools

The Dr. Jaroy Stuckey Workforce Development Initiative with Carl Vinson VAMC

- **Challenge:** How to continue DCS efforts to ensure that students are college and career ready and globally competitive.
- **Innovation:** A partnership with the Carl Vinson Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC) of Dublin to develop a workforce development initiative designed to connect students to potential career opportunities within the VAMC.
 - Named for the late Principal of Dublin High School, Dr. Jaroy Stuckey, to continue to honor his legacy of working with students and providing lifelong experiences.
 - Students have the opportunity to work at the VA in various capacities in 2-4 hr. time frames.
 - Planned two paths for Workforce Academy students:
 - The more academic careers will offer the opportunity to job shadow. Length/time of job shadow will depend on the career field and the VA.
 - Academy students will be selected for specific volunteer opportunities targeted by the VA.
- **Flexibility Used:** Seat Time the volunteer opportunities will not interfere with student attendance or classwork.

Dublin City Schools

Dublin HS Tiny House Project

- **The Challenge:** Students needed more real-life and meaningful work experience
- **The Innovation:** Using Charter System Flexibility to hire Industry-Certified experts into teaching roles and create something that will provide support for the Dublin City communities homeless.
- **Flexibility:** Waiving teacher certification in the hiring process
- **Results:**
 - Project teaches variety of CTEA construction
 - Project maximizes stakeholder partnerships with local land bank, individuals and small businesses in materials acquisitions
 - Land made useful by support from the city
- Each tiny house is between \$7,000-10,000 depending on the fluctuations in raw materials. These are now funded by community members and community support organization
- Finished homes to benefit working poor and families in the City of Dublin. Ribbon Cutting was February 5, 2019.
 - <https://www.13wmaz.com/article/news/dublin-high-school-students-complete-first-tiny-house/93-921952ba-ab02-4a6d-bcae-1f00f2f2e53b>

- <https://www.13wmaz.com/article/news/dublin-high-school-students-build-tiny-houses-for-homeless-and-low-income/93-588400112>

Dublin City Schools

Irish Gifted Academy

- **Challenge:** Strategic Goal of “High Achievement and Success for All Students,” DCS sought to provide better resources to a commonly underserved part of the student population: Gifted identified students.
- **Innovation:** Shift from a traditional pull-out model and instead transition to an all-day gifted program of choice.
 - P-8 in buildings of the former Dublin High School
 - Technology-rich learning environment with project-based individual and cooperative learning integrated thematic curriculum akin to the Ron Clark Academy
 - Family-like atmosphere, students divided into houses (think Harry Potter book series) Younger students receive positive mentor support from older students, and older students given leadership roles in and among their respective houses (each house consists of P-8 students)
 - IGA is a program and not its own school
 - Students return to “base schools” for extracurricular and athletic activities such as Beta Club and football, fostering and inspiring community across DCS
 - The goal for the IGA is to serve as a feeder program for DCS’ successful International Baccalaureate program

Contact: Dr. Fred Williams, Superintendent fred.williams@dcsirish.com 478-353-8000

- [Irish Gifted Academy: Education Reimagined](#) (video)

Dublin City Schools

Leaping Leprechauns

- **Challenge:** How to provide DCS Staff with quality developmentally appropriate child care to retain teachers in the district and to retain their children in the Dublin City Schools.
- **Innovations:**
 - Provide a quality space for children of staff , teen mothers, and business partners to begin their educational journey to become effective communicators, problem solvers, and lifelong learners to fulfill our district’s vision to have globally competitive students.
 - The goal has been to provide quality daycare for our Dublin City staff for the last three years.
 - This aligns with our DCS Belief statement, “Early and ongoing engagement by family and community is critical to success.”
 - Providing the Staff’s young child a quality safe nurturing environment assists in promoting and the Staff’s emotional well-being.
 - Partnering with the Dublin High School CTAE class, Teaching as Profession class, to provide students experience in actually working with young children in a developmentally appropriate way
- **Flexibility:** Staff are able to bring their child to a safe nurturing environment in which they work.
- **Contact:** Dr. Fred Williams, Superintendent fred.williams@dcsirish.com

Dublin City Schools

Baby Irish

- **Challenge:** Students of poverty starts school 30 million words behind compared to students from a higher socio-economic class.
- **Innovation:** By using our charter flexibility, we are able to provide early engagement and intervention to students which is vital for students to become effective communicators, problem solvers and lifelong learners. We're providing early learning activities and instruction for future students and their families. This allows us to build relationships with their prospective principals, teachers, and staff.
- **Flexibility:**

- Staff Daily Schedule (teachers, special education staff, occupational therapy, nurses, physical therapy, etc.) will work a day less a week because it occurs on Saturday -- they won't have to come on Wednesday of that week.
- It's done on a weekend and is a parent workshop as well as screening future students on developmentally appropriate abilities and behavior.
- **Contact:** Dr. Fred Williams, Superintendent fred.williams@dcsirish.com

Evans County Schools

Expanding Option B Diploma Opportunities

Challenge: How to increase support for Option B Diploma

- **Innovation 1:** Earning of High School Credits in Middle School and Integrated Core Credits in High School
 - **LSGT:** They were still establishing LSGTs at that time (2019 Charter System status)
 - **Flexibility Used:** (1) Waived the GADOE certification requirement for physical science course being taught in 8th grade instead of 8th grade science and in Computer Science courses being taught at the middle school level; (2) Waived GADOE curriculum and instructional minutes per subject and certification for World Literature/World History integrated course
 - **Results:** Previous EOC scores in physical science indicated that middle school students scored just as well if not better than students in high school; earning high school credit in middle school will increase the 4-year graduation rate (2022 cohort will be our first collection for this). For the integrated World History/World Literature course, 2025 cohort will be our first group with this integration. Graduation plan data indicates that this will support the 4 -year graduation rate and will support students using their 11th and 12th grade years of high school for Option B requirements.
- **Innovation 2:** Schedule adjusted for CTAE courses to allow students to earn multiple CTAE and core credits within one instructional segment
 - **LSGT:** They were still establishing LSGTs at that time (2019 Charter System status)
 - **Flexibility Used:** Waived the GADOE certification requirements (Computer Science and Allied Health teachers), instructional minutes per subject, and curriculum
 - **Results:** Cohort 2024 will be our first group impacted by the change; however, data indicates that by imbedding a core credit into the CTAE pathway courses and adjusting segments to have students complete a CTAE pathway (3 courses) and a core course in this model, students will earn a pathway within 2 years instead of 3 and meet graduation requirements for core/elective courses simultaneously. The model will support the incorporation of more WBL, youth apprenticeship, internship and dual enrollment opportunities for students in the junior and senior year because high school graduation requirements will be met.

Contact: Kristy C. Vandenberg, Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services, kvandenberg@evanscountyschools.org

Floyd County

LEARNING LOSS

- **Challenge:** To continue to recover student learning loss due to the Pandemic.
- **Innovation:** System-wide approach to school tailored formative assessments, clearly defined instructional models, reading and math interventionists in every elementary school and system wide instructional coaches for every core subject area.
- **Flexibility:** Schools utilized flexibility in selecting and administering formative assessment tools to best meet local school needs and in scheduling for interventions.
- **LSGT Involvement:** LSGT members have been an integral part of the school improvement and strategic planning process utilizing results of formative assessments and other school data to guide the process.
- **Results:** Utilizing tailored formative assessments, clearly defined instructional models, interventionist at the elementary level and core area instructional coaches, based on current data, Floyd County has now recovered 100% of learning loss due to the Pandemic.
- **Charter Funds:** Charter funds assisted in the training for interventionists and coaches and for the implementation of formative assessments.
- **Contact:** Sherry Childs, Fine Arts Coordinator, District Charter Liaison: schilds@floydboe.net

The Floyd County College and Career Academy, based on the input of local businesses and industries, is utilizing flexibility in hiring non-traditional certified instructors to provide training in high needs job markets.

- Business and/or industry certified instructors may be employed utilizing our charter flexibility for certification. Their employment status is individualized depending on the area, experience and specific need.
- Student scheduling at specific businesses or industries is the core of our work based learning program and is driven by individual student schedules.
- Scheduling flexibility is being used to increase work-based learning opportunities for students.
- Our partnership with the local chamber and with the business community allows us to project and schedule depending on specific community needs.

Fulton County Schools

Flexibility in Action

- **Challenge:** The physical layout and diverse student population of Fulton County can pose difficulties for creating policies and selecting academic programs that address the unique needs of schools throughout the district.
- **Innovation:** The tiered flexibility model encourages local decision-making by allowing individual schools to request waivers from district and state policies/laws that might hinder the implementation of innovative initiatives that support strategic goals.
- **LGST Participation:** Governance teams are trained on problem-solving strategies and provided resources to aid in the navigation of state and district policies and laws. Councils must complete an action-research application and allow for public feedback when seeking approval for flexibility waivers.
- **Waivers:** Instructional Minutes, TAG Delivery Models, Graduation Requirements, Credit Recovery, Class Size, etc.
- **Results:** In 2021, leaders in Fulton approved 31 flexibility waivers at a variety of schools throughout the district. Since becoming a Charter System, FCS has seen district-wide gains in academic performance and school climate indicators.
- **Contact:** Freddie Benschine – Coordinator, Governance & Flexibility
 - benschinef@fultonschools.org | www.fultonschools.org/sgc

Gainesville City School System – Horizon Academy

- **Challenge:** Gainesville High School's constant enrollment of 2,300 is impacted by the transiency 3,500 high school enrollment over a 4-year period. Consistently, one-third of the students enroll after 9th grade entry, one-third of the students withdraw, and approximately 20% enroll and withdraw.
- **Innovation:** Horizon Academy, a non-traditional high school, is needed to meet the ever-growing demand of transiency, off-track students, and even accelerated options.
- **SGC Involvement:** The high school administration, leadership team, and the School Governance Council discussed transiency data and the challenges of students' academic needs. The SGC gave feedback on the purpose and intended results of the non-traditional program. Their input informed the planning and implementation during the first year.
- **Use of Charter Funds:** With 2023-2024 being the first year of implementation, charter funds are designated for staff, innovative classroom design, and instructional resources specific to the needs of the students enrolled. Future use of funds may support location renovations and additional staff as the enrollment increases.

Hart County Schools

- **Challenge:** Securing effective CTAE instructors with hands-on, industry experience.
- **Solution:** Waive certification for CTAE instructors.
- **Flexibility:** GaPSC certification rules
- **Results:** Locally developed professional qualifications (PQs) are in place.
 - Available pathways meet the needs of the community as well as the interests and assessed aptitudes of students. Marine Engine Technology courses are the district's newest offerings.
 - Training and experience relative to the assigned teaching position are honored on the district's pay scale.
 - CTAE instructors are considered (by colleagues, students, parents, and community members) as experts in their fields. Here are a few examples:

- A former lawyer, judge, and police officer instructs classes within the Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security pathway.
- Culinary arts courses are taught by a former chef; students cater local civic events and meetings.
- A veteran registered nurse oversees the Health Science pathway. In FY23, twenty-one high school students were credentialed as Certified Nursing Assistants.
- Addition Notes: All CTAE instructors receive clearance certificates from the GaPSC.
- GaDOE's charts containing CTAE Charter Waiver Equivalents are useful resources. (See PQ and In-Field Implementation Guide)
- Contact: Jennifer Carter, Superintendent - jcarter@hart.k12.ga.us 706-376-5141

Liberty County - Increasing Job Career Awareness at the Middle School Level

- **The Challenge:** There is an increased need for Engineering jobs and other tech career jobs in the area with the different plants being built in surrounding counties.
- **The Innovation:** Utilizing LCCA staff and facility to offer an Engineering class at the middle school for 7th & 8th graders to enroll in as a connections class to provide skill awareness called Reinforcing Innovative Skills in Engineering - The R.I.S.E Program. Plans are to broaden career options at the other middle schools.
- **Flexibility:** seat time, certification, curriculum and scheduling
- **SGT Involvement:** Members of several SGT were involved in the strategic planning process for implementation of the course and logistics for students.
- **Results:**
 - An increased number of student enrollment and awareness of technical career jobs. Students at the middle school began to see the necessity of what this career provides and in turn are choosing pathways prior to entering high school.
 - Expanding Accelerated Career Pathways
 - LCCA Career Summer Camps for 7th & 8th grade students
 - Junior Achievement through Social Studies economics standards workshops & career simulations
 - Career Pathway Fair & Be Pro Be Proud Career Bus
- **Charter Funds:** Student resources
- **Contact:** Kellie Ziegler kzeigler@liberty.k12.ga.us

Liberty County

Digital Learning Days

- **The Challenge:** The critical need to address short- and long-term school closures.
- **The Innovation:** The district has developed a Digital Learning Plan (DLP) for all stakeholders that allows the district to begin online learning immediately when schools are closed. Specific guidance provided for access to materials, attendance, resources, and expectations for staff and students.
- **Flexibility:** The DLP allows the district to declare a Digital Learning Day at a moment's notice and continue to focus on academic and social emotional needs of students.
- **LSGT Involvement:** Some SGT members provided feedback, along with teacher, parent, and student forums.
- **Flexibility Used:** Broad Flexibility allows the district to declare a Digital Learning Day at a moment's notice and continue to focus on academic and social emotional needs of students.
- **Results:** Used a modified version of the plan in March and now expanded. Currently 2,300 students will attend virtually this fall.
- **Charter Funds:** Used to provide Canvas as the learning management system. Also, for digital content for classroom and online use.
- **Contact:** Kellie Ziegler, Assist. Superintendent of Teaching & Learning kzeigler@liberty.k12.ga.us

Liberty County - Increasing Time for PLC Staff Participation & Collaboration

- **The Challenge:** The need for district level PLCs so all staff can participate and collaborate with their peers across the district without taking away time from teacher workdays.
- **The Innovation:** The student calendar was reduced from 180 days to 178 days. The teacher calendar went from 10 teacher workdays to 12 teacher workdays. District PLCs take place quarterly and last approximately 3 hours. The four half day PLCs within the 12 teacher workdays ensures teachers still have 10 teacher workdays and meet quarterly for PLCs with their peers across the district.
- **Flexibility:** By reducing the number of student days, the district is able to provide District PLCs without cutting into valuable teacher workdays.
- **SGT Involvement:** Members of several SGT were involved in the strategic planning process which highlighted the concerns of teachers regarding loss of time during teacher workdays. This led to further discussion which in turn led to the solution.
- **Results:** Teachers do not lose any teacher workday hours and are more productive during PLCs as they recognize that the time has been set aside for collaboration and does not take away from their teacher workday time.
- **Charter Funds:** Funding for the reduced calendar is not required however the funds were used to purchase Canvas for student learning. The district now also uses Canvas for District PLCs and all professional learning for teachers
- **Contact:** Kellie Ziegler kzeigler@liberty.k12.ga.us

Liberty County - Alternative Fine Arts Course vs. Traditional

- **The Challenge:** Students could benefit from more options other than the traditional Fine Arts courses offered in their high schools.
- **The Innovation:** The district has implemented Modern Dance, Piano, Photography, and Gaming and Animation pathways. Audio-Visual Film Production was added in 2021 - 2022 and a Podcast room was added in the 2022 - 2023 school year.
 - Courses are offered at 3 facilities.
 - Buses run throughout the day at the end of every block. Students attend daily.
- **LSGT involvement:** Involved when implemented. Approval of course materials and supplies using school-based charter funds.
- **Flexibility Used:** seat time, certification, curriculum and scheduling
- **Charter Funds:** Funding is used for teacher salaries and benefits as well as class resources and materials.
- **Results:** Teachers worked part time and now are full time due to increase of student interest.
 - Hinesville Area Arts Council awarded a \$5,000 Gifted Internship and mentor to a student to cast, direct, produce, and present "A Christmas Carol" in December.
 - The Arts Council committed to another \$5000 grant for a student to do something similar this year.
 - The student received a full credit for the internship.
- **Contact:** Kellie Ziegler kzeigler@liberty.k12.ga.us

Liberty County - RESSLA (Retired Educators Supporting Student Learning & Achievement)

- **The Challenge:** Closing the achievement gaps by meeting the student needs to provide additional support in the areas of ELA and Math remediation.
- **The Innovation:** Schools select retired educators to work 49% and support students in the areas of ELA & Math. RESSLA teachers work with students on different capacities - progress monitoring, remediation skills, small group pull out and when needed acceleration.
- **Flexibility:** seat time, certification, curriculum and scheduling
- **SGT Involvement:** Involved when implemented. Approval of course materials and supplies using school-based charter funds.
- **Results:** Increase in student support for ELA & Math; additional remediation blocks which increased student achievement and reduces the number of tier 2 support (RTI) students.
- **Charter Funds:** Funding is used for teacher pay.

- **Contact:** Kellie Ziegler kzeigler@liberty.k12.ga.us

Liberty County - Credit Recovery & Credit Repair

- **The Challenge:** Increase the graduation rate in each high school so that all students complete the required courses.
- **The Innovation:** Online credit recovery and credit repair is provided to students at the two high schools as well as the alternative educational center. Students are guided through Edgenuity courses and supported by teachers to complete course credit. This is completed through Study Skills classes during the regular school day, summer school, and after school. With the program, students can assess what they know and only complete the sections failed in order to “repair” the course for full credit.
- **Flexibility:** seat time, curriculum and scheduling
- **SGT Involvement:** Involved when implemented. Approval of course materials and supplies using school-based charter funds.
- **Results:** Increased number of students completing high school credit to increase graduation rates.
- **Charter Funds:** Funding credit recovery resource and staff extra pay
- **Contact:** Kellie Ziegler kzeigler@liberty.k12.ga.us

Liberty County - Technical Certificate of Credits (TCC) Programs

- **The Challenge:** Students completing Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC) programs in a timely manner. Military population may leave prior to completing the program if spread out over time.
- **The Innovation:** We worked with Savannah Technical College utilizing our scheduling flexibility to create a schedule that allows our students to complete a program and earn a TCC in one semester. These include:
- Cosmetology, Barbering, Automotive, HVAC, Criminal Justice, Aviation, & Welding programs.
- **Flexibility:** Scheduling, seat time, transportation provided
- **SGT Involvement:** Involved in the planning and implementation of the new schedule.
- **Results:** Increase in the number of students earning dual enrollment credit and a Technical Certificate of Credit. Greater probability of military students earning an industry certification prior to a duty station change.
- **Contact:** Kellie Ziegler kzeigler@liberty.k12.ga.us

Lumpkin County Schools

Adulting Day

- **The Challenge:** How do we ensure all our students graduate from high school with the necessary tools and knowledge to live on their own? We provide them with a first-class education and prepare them for post-secondary options, but how do we prepare them for skills like changing a tire, basic car maintenance, cooking skills, general first aid, clothing care, and taking care of home repairs?
- **The Innovation:** For the past two years, Lumpkin County created a day dedicated to seniors that would meet the needs of this challenge. By partnering with the CTAE department and their contacts in the community, every senior rotated through five sessions throughout a full school day to learn hands-on skills necessary for success in the real world.
- **LSGT Involvement:** Was involved in the proposal and the approval of charter funds to fund this innovation. LSGT members also volunteered their time on Adulting Day to offer assistance.
- **Charter Funds:** To pay for the equipment and supplies for Adulting Day, Lumpkin County used Charter funds from the state to pay for this innovation.
- **Results:** Well planned and impactful!
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uG-it5hDP38XQI9fhMPHd02BzZNh2rzA/view?usp=sharing>
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/171q5BpRKnWlh9sHGIQn5B2xUh9HGTR6k/view?usp=sharing>
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nfOIAfSI0t9Dmw3VhrVChej19theismb/view?usp=sharing>
- **Contact:** Jason Lemley (Public Relations Coord/A.P./CTAE Director)

Lumpkin County

Music Industry Pathway

- **The Challenge:** Lumpkin was looking for something that would provide an opportunity to integrate different areas of STEAM but would complement and not compete with our current programs in Fine Arts and CTAE. They also wanted to draw on the rich tradition of the County's musical excellence and utilize the talents of current staff.
 - The Innovation: Creative industries contribute more than \$60B to Georgia's economy each year. An avenue in which students could learn more about opportunities in this field and experience every aspect from playing a guitar to recording an album.
 - LSGT: The LSGT was not involved until student interest had been determined. At that point, the concept was shared, and they were completely on board.
- **Flexibility Used:** Charter flexibility was used to create a unique pathway to best serve students.
- **DOE- From Compliance to Support"**
 - Support for the development of pathways that better meet the needs of districts, industries and individual students (Lumpkin).
 - Standards can be merged from 135 pathways/17 career clusters: unique needs of charters such as International Business (Thinc Academy, Troup)
- **Results:**
 - Registration numbers indicated that 243 of the 1156 LCHS students registered for one of the three courses in the pathway in 2019.
 - Since formal approval, est. \$30,000 worth of equipment donated by former LCHS student and Grammy Award winning artist Zac Brown.
 - Began teaching courses in the Fall of 2019, moving forward in 20-21.
- **Contact:** Radford Windham (creator and driver of this innovation) radford.windham@lumpkinschools.com
 - DOE CTAE Local Pathway Course Submission Process and the templates: <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/CTAE/Pages/Programs-of-Study.aspx>

Marietta City Schools

Extended Year ESOL Pilot

- **Challenge 1:** Compounded "summer slide"-Many ESOL students do not speak or hear English or have enriching experiences during the summer break from school.
- **Challenge 2:** More students need to exit ESOL in early grades
- **Innovation:** Students who attend summer program will exit ESOL the next school year & will not continue the "summer slide" in academics and English application
 - 120 ESOL students (grades 1-3) who scored at similar ACCESS levels and demonstrated potential to benefit the most from the summer program; MAP scores also used
 - 15:1 S/T ratio; teacher has students the next year if possible
 - Focused academics and ESOL
 - Transportation, free breakfast, and lunch provided
 - Teachers work 21 days during the summer in exchange for 21 days off during the school year Parenting classes and English instruction for parents: childcare for younger and online instruction for older siblings available
- **Flexibility:** Program scheduling for students and teacher calendar days; repurpose funds for services
- **Results:**
 - 56% had increase in MAP scores, overall little or no regression
 - Potential use: Extended Day, EIP, Gifted, Other...

Marietta City Schools

Literacy

- **Challenge:** Post-pandemic students experienced learning loss and achievement gaps. The need for literacy became the priority.
- **Innovation:** Literacy and Justice for All (LJFA)- Collaborative between United Way, Atlanta Speech School, Learn4Life, Cobb Collaborative, Wellstar, and early learning providers to support every child in Marietta to reach their fullest reading potential.
- **Flexibility:** 40 additional full-time reading specialists in grades 1-5. These reading specialists will provide intensive reading instruction, delivered through a 1:10 teacher-student ratio, during the reading block to all students in grades 1-5 who are reading below grade level.
- **Results:** Marietta [City Schools superintendent speaks about improvements to literacy scores | 11alive.com](#)
MCS third-grade reading scores are 5 times higher than the state and metro Atlanta area.

Marietta City Schools

Parent University

- **Challenge:** Following isolation and remote learning due to COVID-19 restrictions, never has the significance of relationships been more important in the education setting.
- **Innovation:** MCS piloted Marietta Parent University (MPU) at Dunleith Elementary School in the Fall of 2022. MPU is focused on Raising Highly Capable Kids (RHCK), which is a 13 session, evidence-based parenting program developed to build stronger families by empowering parents with the confidence, tools, and skills they need to raise healthy, caring, and responsible children. Our program increases parents' knowledge and skill level of the essential building blocks every child needs — the 40 Developmental Assets from Search Institute, which are proven to increase childhood resiliency and academic achievement.
- **Flexibility:** Parent liaisons worked in the evenings from 6-8 p.m. to facilitate sessions. Each session families were provided dinner, gas cards, groceries, and childcare. MPU concludes with a graduation ceremony for parents who completed the required sessions.
- **Results:** Marietta Parent University (MPU) was a huge success. Of the 40 families that attended 32 completed all required sessions. MCS has continued MPU at Park Street Elementary School and Marietta Middle School for the 2023-2024 school year.

Morgan County

Morgan County College and Career Academy

- **The Challenge:** How do we design and build a wall-to-wall College and Career Academy in a rural, single-high school district? We provide students with a combination of pathways and “academies” to provide them with a first-class education while preparing them for post-secondary opportunities.
- **The Innovation:** Over the past four years, Morgan County has worked with local businesses, government agencies, and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission to provide its students with industry experts to teach and train in various trades and industries where certified teaching staffs are rare in the locale.
- **LGST/CCA Board of Directors:** After deliberation, it was decided that the LSGT & CCA Board of Directors would function as separate bodies; however, the work of both groups complements one another as they develop programs to meet the needs and interests of all students by providing a rich and balanced curriculum for both students' academic and technical needs within the community.
- **Partnerships:** Morgan Memorial Hospital, Morgan County Fire Department, Morgan County Government Offices, and more than 80 business and industry placements for students. Teachers have been provided with externship opportunities with major local employers through our Chamber of Commerce.

Terrell County Charter School System

Believe-Achieve-Sustain

Ensuring Academic Achievement

- **The Challenge:** Terrell County Charter School System wanted to ensure that all students at Cooper-Carver Elementary School, regardless of socioeconomic status, receives the proper education in order to become lifelong learners

- **The Innovation**-In order to focus on the achievement gaps in all subject areas, a targeted intervention schedule was created to provide the necessary support for struggling students.
- **LSGT Involvement**-In collaboration with the Local School Governance Team, which consisted of parent and community stakeholders, there was genuine support to use consolidated funds to implement targeted instruction that focused on students' area of weakness.
- **Flexibility Used**-Consolidation of Funds-local, state, and federal funds were used to support needed materials for targeted instructional learning time.
- **Results**-Due to the implementation of targeted instructional learning time, students have shown gains in all subject area where mastery is needed. In 2016, Our College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) was 47.5, and in 2019 the score was 69.3 (21.8 percentage increase)
- **Contact**-LaTosha Peters, Principal of Cooper-Carver Elementary ; lpeters@terrell.k12.ga.us

Union County Schools

- **CHALLENGE:** Learning gaps identified resulting in students not being prepared for life after high school
- **SOLUTION:** Provide relevant instruction through the CCA to connect student interests with academic achievement and skill development
- **FLEXIBILITY:** Using our seat time waiver to provide multiple academic courses blended within CTAE courses in the CCA
- **RESULTS:** Students are performing at higher levels academically and learning valuable skills which puts them ahead when they begin post-secondary training, join the workforce, or join the military

Union County Schools

- **CHALLENGE:** Workforce shortage in healthcare workers across the region
- **SOLUTION:** Use STEM model to provide cross-curricular academic and healthcare instruction for students while providing constant connections for students with Union General Health System
- **FLEXIBILITY:** Using our seat time waiver to provide multiple academic courses blended within CTAE courses in the CCA
- **RESULTS:** Students are completing healthcare curriculum and academics early in order to participate in dual enrollment, healthcare internships, and complete CAN certification before graduation.

Union County Schools

- **CHALLENGE:** Workforce shortage in government and public administration across the region
- **SOLUTION:** Teach all 8th and 10th grade students the Government and Public Administration courses blended with the 8th Grade Georgia Studies and 10th Grade American Government/Civics courses
- **FLEXIBILITY:** Use the GaPSC certification waiver for SROs to teach Government and Public Administration
- **RESULTS:** All 8th and 10th grade students are introduced to careers within the Government and Public Administration sector with real-world connections.

Samples of Possible Waivers

Certification

- **Challenge #1:** CCA business partners have advised that students in several career pathways could benefit from the expertise provided by practitioners as instructors. State law requires teachers to have a teaching certificate.
- **Solution #1:** Hire RN to teach Anatomy and Physiology; Contract with a local chef to teach Culinary Arts
- **Challenge #2:** Small rural community cannot find a certified art teacher for the elementary school
- **Solution #2:** Hire a local artist to teach part-time or full-time and provide art instruction in grades K-5.
- **OCGA 20-2-108, 20-2-200**

Class Size & Staffing

- **Challenge:** In an elementary school, many classes exceed state max class size well into the year as new students move in. SGT has determined that the school is not maximizing use of personnel to meet SIP goals
- **SBOE Rule:** 160-5-1
- **Solution:** Kindergarten class with 22 students and para-pro has additional student enroll in December. No need to split class and hire additional teacher
- **Solution:** State requires a full-time media specialist. SGT recommends having ½ time Media Specialist and ½ Math Coach to meet SIP goals in math. Could be the same person, 2 people sharing these positions, or 2 people working PT. No additional personnel required.

Class Size, Staffing & Program Delivery

- **Challenge:** An elementary school has several students who do not meet program criteria for gifted or REP programs but who can benefit from services provided by teachers in those classrooms. The specific program delivery models described in Georgia law are getting in the way of the school begin able to better meet their students' needs
- **SBOE Rule:**160-4-2.38, 160-4-2-.17
- **Solution:** Students served by need, not label. School determines gifted delivery model based on student needs. Advanced students served in Gifted class. Students in need of remediation placed in REP classes. Both classes exceed the state's maximum class size. No more funding available, but more students served.

Alternative/Non-Traditional Education Programs, 20 Additional Day Funds, Health and Physical Education Rule

- **Challenge:** School needs an alternative education program that meets student needs and aligns with system strategic improvement plan and students' needs. Programs specified in state law are not meeting students' needs.
- **OCGA § 20-2-154.1; 20-2-240; 20-2-300; 20-2-184.1, 160-4-2-.12**
- **Solution:** Design a grade 5-12 program that provides opportunities for remediation, acceleration, credit recovery, and offers non-traditional pathways to a high school diploma and/or a technical college certificate

Retention Requirements

- **Challenge:** Ga law and SBOE rule base promotion/retention in specific grades on one test score. School's Data Teams and RTI teams have determined that that many of the students just need additional time and resources to achieve academic success in some, but not all, academic areas. School wants to base P/R on totality of info and not one test score and serve students in the areas in which they are not achieving mastery.
- **SBOE Rule:**160-4-2.11
- **Solution:** Students receive instruction based on their needs and not their grade level designation. Instruction continues until students demonstrate content mastery.

Salary Schedule Requirements

- **Challenge:** School system has a variety of personnel needs for positions that do not fit into the state salary schedule. System wants to strengthen state salary schedule for increased compensation in critical, high need areas
- **OCGA 20-2-212**
- **Solution:** Hire RN to teach Healthcare Science course and adjust salary to be competitive with healthcare industry; Build a Pay for Performance grants program for teachers; Contract with 49% staff at set hourly rate and maximize personnel allocations

Categorical Allotment Requirements and Direct Classroom Expenditures

- **Challenge:** School and system budgets are not based on system strategic improvement plan and students' needs. Based instead on how GA law specifies how funds must be spent

- OCGA 20-2-183, 20-2-167, 20-2-171
- Solution: Expend funds in area of professional development related to a particular goal and area of need in the strategic plan (i.e., math achievement, working with EL population); Use state funding marked for remediation instruction to provide transportation to summer remediation classes

Consolidated Funds

- Federal law allows districts to consolidate federal funds (Title 1,2,3, Special Education, etc.) with state and local funds into a single pool of funds to support a schoolwide program
- Federal funds lose their identity and are treated as state and local funds
- School no longer has Title I teachers with restrictions on what they can do; equipment purchases funded through the consolidated pool are not treated as federal property
- Consolidated schoolwide budget becomes one line item, except for mandated federal set asides
- Started as a pilot. GA in 6th year of implementation of consolidated funds project districts (43 districts FY21)
- Districts reporting significant benefits from the increased flexibility
 - Contact: Carly Ambler at cambler@doe.k12.ga.us

Charter System QBE Funds

- Charter System funding is included in the QBE allotment and can be carried over from year to year
- Districts have flexibility over how they use the charter system funding within these parameters: to implement innovations, support the school improvement and/or district strategic plan, training/support for School Governance Teams, school/district staff and leadership development in the work of effective charter systems.
- Best Practices
- Align use of funding with school improvement planning and district strategic planning initiatives
- Align use of funding with areas of student achievement need, supported by data
- Involve SGTs in decisions about the use of funding
- Review annually use of funding and adjust allocation, as needs change
- Monitor the impact of funding on student achievement

How are Charter Systems Using Flexibility?

- Flexible scheduling and customized delivery of services/instruction (i.e, hire additional para-pro to assist with small group instruction)
- Enhance curriculum (i.e., creating a locally funded program to meet the specific needs of students- Freshman Focus course)
- Promote college and career readiness (i.e., fund a College and Career Academy)
- Support Staffing/Professional Development (i.e., hire a Leadership Coach to work with students and staff, hire math coach; provide mini grants to teachers for innovative projects)
- Increase Access to Technology (i.e., purchase software licenses/computers/tablets for students to use at school and home)
- Promote Community Engagement (i.e., fund a Science Night, Reading Night, Technology Fair that involves parents and community, Mock Interviews)
- Support Positive School Climate (i.e., offset the cost of guest speakers for assemblies and experiential learning opportunities for students, offset cost of PBI incentives/Reading Incentives/Student Leadership Initiative)
- Provide Materials to Increase Data Resources and Increase Data-Driven Decisions (i.e, purchase formative and/or summative assessment materials; purchase test prep materials or fund a test prep teacher)
- School Level Governance - i.e., pay for conference registrations for SGT members, professional development for SGT, allot funding allocated by the SGT in alignment with School Improvement Plans...
- *And MORE!*

- *School Day and Year for Students and Employees*
- **Challenge: Middle school calendar and school day schedule are not meeting student needs for strategic areas, such as career exploration, social emotional support services and programs**
- **O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151, 20-2-160, 20-2-161.1, 20-2-165, 20-2-168, 20-2-168(c), 20-2-240.**
Solution: Create opportunities for career exploration in Grades 6-8 by restructuring the school day to allow for a full day of career exploration at given intervals during the school year (monthly, quarterly, etc.) and added opportunities for students to have social emotional support services and programs

- **Challenge: Compounded “summer slide”- Many ESOL students do not speak or hear English or have enriching experiences during the summer break from school.**
- **Challenge 2: More students need to exit ESOL in early grades**
- **Goal: Students who attend summer program will exit ESOL faster & will not continue the “summer slide” in academics and English application Program scheduling for students and teacher workdays; repurpose funding**
- **Solution:**
 - **Extended Year - An affordable 4-week summer program Teachers work 21 days during the summer (June, same contract year) in exchange for 21 days off during the school year (personnel cost of summer teaching saved). Repurpose or consolidate federal funds for other costs.**
 - **Students receive more hours of instruction than with 45-minute daily segments (no additional FTE earned).**
 - **Focused academics (learning loss) and ESOL, transportation, breakfast and lunch provided Parenting and English classes for parents; childcare for younger siblings (teacher pathway) and online instruction for older siblings can be made available.**

* Potential use: Extended Day, EIP, Remedial, Gifted, Other...