

Bishop Hall Charter School



START-UP CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION AND RENEWAL ADDENDUM

SEPTEMBER 2013



Start-Up Charter School Application

New or Renewal

Bishop Hall Charter School

1819 East Clay Street

Thomasville, Georgia 31792

John D. Barge
State Superintendent
April 2013

START-UP CHARTER APPLICATION COVER PAGES

Check one: New Petition Renewal Petition (If renewal, when was the original charter term start date? We were formerly an LEA Start-up, Renewed, Fall 2009)

Name of the Georgia nonprofit corporation that will hold the charter if granted:

Bishop Hall Charter School, Inc.

Name of Proposed Charter School: Bishop Hall Charter School

Local school system in which charter school will be physically located:

Thomas County Schools

School address:

Current address: 1819 East Clay St. Thomasville, GA 31792

Future address: 220 North Pinetree Blvd. Thomasville, GA 31792

Contact person: Dr. Terrel Solana Chair, Board of Directors

Name Title

Contact address: 158 Stone Bridge Drive

Thomasville, GA 31757

Telephone number of contact: (229) 226-1011(Office) (229) 224-2007 (Cell)

Fax number of contact: (229) 226-5744

E-mail address of contact: tsolana@rose.net

Charter School Name Bishop Hall Charter School

Type Locally Approved Start-up (Locally-approved Start-up, State Chartered Special School, Career Academy, Jointly Authorized, Virtual)

Approved by the Thomas County Schools Board of Education on October 15, 2013

Grade Levels Served 8-12

Ages Served 13-21

Proposed Opening/Renewal Date: July 1, 2014

Proposed Charter Term: Five Years July 2014-May 2019 (If this is a renewal petition with a term other than 5 years requested, please give the rationale for the requested term length)

Mission Statement: Bishop Hall offers educational and social opportunities through traditional and nontraditional approaches intended to assist our clientele in realizing their potential. The success of this mission will enable Bishop Hall not only to raise the school system’s graduation rate but also to prepare students for continued growth and enrichment through college, career, and post-secondary readiness.

For each year of the proposed charter term, please indicate the number of pupils the charter school plans to serve.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Yr 1									25	30	30	30	30	145
Yr 2									26	32	34	34	34	160
Yr 3									27	36	37	37	38	175
Yr 4									28	39	41	41	41	190
Yr 5									29	42	43	43	43	200
Yr 6									25	30	30	30	30	145
Yr 7									26	32	34	34	34	160
Yr 8									27	36	37	37	38	175
Yr 9									28	39	41	41	41	190
Yr 10									29	42	43	43	43	200

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1(e)(2), please complete the following Affidavit. A list of secure and verifiable documents can be found on our website. This form should be completed by the CEO or President of the Non-profit Corporation.

O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1(e)(2) Affidavit

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

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

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

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

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

_____.

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

Executed in _____ (city), _____ (state).

Signature of Applicant

Printed Name of Applicant

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN
BEFORE ME ON THIS THE
___ DAY OF _____, 20___

NOTARY PUBLIC
My Commission Expires:

START - UP CHARTER APPLICATION

THE CASE

1. WHY WE WANT A CHARTER

- **Motivation for application**

Bishop Hall is a well-established charter school, in its fifteenth year of operation. The institution is applying for a renewal charter in order to continue its original mission of offering a non-traditional educational approach for students who are not succeeding in the traditional high school setting and thereby elevate the overall graduation rate for the Thomas County School District. This charter will ensure that in response to findings of the College and Career Readiness Index (CCRPI), the administration and faculty will observe the requirements of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS). In addition, the school will add another grade level (8th) to our student population and will continue to expand its range to incorporate virtual school learning and the CrossRoads Alternative Program.

- **What can we do with a charter that we cannot do without one?**

BHCS will continue to offer a curriculum that incorporates both innovative and traditional methodologies and practices appropriate to the individual needs of our at-risk population. Small classes, flexible scheduling, differentiated instruction, performance-based assessment, experiential learning opportunities, extensive student support services, and supplemental support from area foundations are the distinct characteristics that distinguish Bishop Hall from non-charter schools. This approach allows students who have had difficulties in the past to graduate within five years while still meeting core state graduation requirements.

- **Involvement of parents, community members, and stakeholders**

Originally, Bishop Hall was conceived as a much-needed addition to the community. In 1998, inspired by the collaborative efforts of Communities in Schools and Family Connection, city and county educators and community leaders signed on to create a new kind of school to meet the needs of an underserved population. In time, the Thomas County system became the authorizing agent of this school, and Bishop Hall has operated as a Local Education Authority (LEA) Startup in this system. Nevertheless, Bishop Hall has served students not only from the county but also from the Thomasville City system and from nearby communities as well.

Bishop Hall has been housed, rent-free on the campus of the Vashti residential facility. Over the past two years, the school has dealt with ongoing facilities issues related to the age of our building and the need to expand due to growth of the student body (anticipated maximum enrollment of 200). With the idea that the district might either lease or purchase this structure, so that Specialized Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) monies could be used for much-needed renovations, the Board entered negotiations with the Methodist Women's Global Board of Ministries. When these negotiations failed, current board members elected to use E-SPLOST funds to construct a new, state-of-the-art building. Plans for a new 22,000 square foot building to house the charter school have already received preliminary approval from the facilities section of the Georgia DOE. It is hoped that the construction project will be out to bid by December 1, 2013. The Thomas County Board of Education has committed \$3.5 million to this project from E-SPLOST proceeds.

Other stakeholders include the following: the president of Thomas University, who nominated a vice-president at the university to sit on the board; the president of Southwest Georgia Technical College (SWGTC), who has conferred at length about dual enrollment and a partnership with our future contiguous campuses, also nominated a vice-president to serve as a member of Bishop Hall's governing board. Persons associated with local foundations also sit on the governing board, as does a representative from the Thomasville-Thomas County Chamber of Commerce, and the manager of the Thomasville office of the Georgia Department of Labor. Area foundations also serve as key stakeholders in the success of the school, having contributed significant funds that have enabled the school to operate.

Board members will naturally provide ongoing oversight to the management of the school. Thomas University (TU) offers academic courses contributing to the academic and fine arts pathways. The Thomas University vice president brings decades of specialization in developmental studies to bear. In addition, TU has co-sponsored Bishop Hall's involvement with the PeaceJam program, field trips, campus visitations, and student luncheons. SWGTC currently offers college level academic courses as well as vocational training that will contribute to the academic and Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) pathways. The foundations will contribute financial support that allows BHCS to treat students to experiential outings as well as offer medical, financial and social support for needy students. The foundations' supplemental funding allows BHCS to continue providing smaller student-teacher ratios, employ highly qualified teachers, and conduct experiential travel. The Department of Labor representative brings expertise about the local job market and connections for junior and senior externships, plus direct connections to Job Corps and Youth Challenge training programs.

ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES, PLANS, AND WAIVERS

2 . Academic Goals

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE GOALS
GOAL 1
<p>The Charter School will perform above the level that would place it on the Priority Schools list, the Focus Schools list, or the Alert Schools list. The Charter School will also meet all targets (currently CCRPI and State Performance Targets), as defined by Georgia state requirements and the state's waiver of No Child Left Behind, subject to any amendment, waiver or reauthorization thereof. Students will demonstrate proficiency and improvement over prior years' performance.*</p>
<p>* Quoted from GADOE Academic Performance Goals</p>
Measure 1
<p><u>CRCT</u>: Sixty percent of eighth grade students will meet or exceed all Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests and will pass the Grade Eight Writing Assessment by 2014. Scores will increase by 10% each year until a 100% passing rate is achieved in 2018-19.</p>
Measure 2
<p><u>EOCT</u>: Sixty percent of students will meet or exceed all End of Course Tests by 2014. Scores will increase by 10% each year until a 100% passing rate is achieved in 2018-19.</p>
Measure 3
<p><u>GHS GT Writing</u>: Eighty percent of students will meet or exceed the required writing test score by year 2014-15, increasing by 5% yearly until a passing rate of 100% is reached by 2018-19.</p>
Measure 4
<p><u>Graduation Rate</u>: Bishop Hall will contribute at least an additional 5% to the Thomas County Five Year Extended Cohort graduation rate over each of the next five years, beginning with a total of 80% by 2014-15, culminating with 100% by 2019-20.</p>
GOAL 2: N/A

GOAL 3 - Grades 9-12
<p>The Charter School will demonstrate post high school readiness.</p> <p><u>Bishop Hall's Goal 3:</u> By 2014-15 80% of students will have completed a Career Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) pathway, or an advanced academic pathway, or a fine arts pathway, culminating in 100% by 2019.</p>
Measure 1
<p><u>Participation in dual enrollment:</u> Eighty percent of juniors and seniors will enroll in courses at Thomas University, Southwest Georgia Technical College, or the Prep Academy at Thomas County Central High School.</p>
Measure 2
<p><u>Completing a pathway:</u> Eighty percent of graduates will have completed a multi-course CTAE, academic, or fine arts pathway.</p>
Measure 3
<p><u>COMPASS Test:</u> Sixty percent of juniors or seniors will pass the COMPASS Test for entry into the dual enrollment program at Southwest Georgia Technical College.</p>
GOAL 4: Grades 6-8
<p>The Charter School will demonstrate high school readiness. See Goal 1, Measure 1.</p>
GOAL 5: Grades K-5 N/A

<p>GOAL 6: School Specific Goal. Related to mission or innovativeness</p>
<p>Bishop Hall will provide programs that meet the socio-cultural needs of our students by expanding their awareness through opportunities for travel, personal growth, and entrepreneurial opportunities.</p>
<p>Measure 1</p>
<p><u>Experiential Learning</u>: Bishop Hall will expose students to experiences that serve to further their educational and occupational goals as well as their social and cultural awareness. At least 70% of students will participate in at least one field trip or experiential activity during the course of each academic year.</p>
<p>Measure 2</p>
<p><u>The BHCS Student Support Team (SST)</u>: The school’s therapist, guidance counselor, and social services coordinator will provide students and their families with a range of support services designed to enhance their cognitive, physical, and socio-economic functioning. Services will be quantified at the end of each academic year according to the number and percentage of students and family members seen and the dollar amount invested.</p>
<p>Measure 3</p>
<p><u>Attendance</u> is a crucial element of student success; therefore, administration, faculty, and support services will monitor attendance closely and record students’ efforts to make up missed days by attending after-school work sessions, Saturday School, or Night School. In the first year of the new charter, the target is 90% attendance per day, with an increase of 2.5% per year for the next four years. Of particular focus will be the reduction of percentage of students who miss more than fifteen days per year. The intent is to reduce the percentage of absentees by ten percent for each year of the charter, resulting in a 50% reduction by 2019.</p>

3. Knowing the school is on track to meet goals

- Assessments: The school will administer the following assessments in order to obtain performance data for each student:
 - Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT): a state-mandated test administered to students in grades three through eight in content areas of reading, English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.
 - Grade Eight Writing Assessment: a test of expository and persuasive writing.
 - End-Of-Course-Tests (EOCTs): in state-required subjects, including ninth and eleventh grade literature, Physical Science, Biology, U.S. History, Economics, CCGPS Coordinate Algebra, CCGPS Analytic Geometry, and/or Math II.
 - Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT): writing, ELA, math, social studies, and science, as required for appropriate students.
 - COMPASS and ASSET tests: administered to dual-enrollment students by SWGTC.
 - A+: a K12 program that creates an individualized learning environment by linking student skill level, curriculum content, and assessment items to state standards.
 - Study Island: a program designed to help students master content specified in state and Common Core standards. It includes Common Core diagnostic pre- and post tests and benchmark tests.
 - USA Test Prep: a program that allows students to work with self-directed activities while other students can receive individual attention from the teacher. The diagnostic benchmark system provides a performance snapshot at the student, class, school, and district level.
 - Teacher-generated in-house assessments
- Baseline Achievement Data:
 - Student Growth Percentile Measure: tested subjects include reading, English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies for grades 6-8 and all high school courses for which there is an EOCT.
 - Student Learning Objectives: for courses covering subjects not tested by the EOCTs. These are content-specific, grade-level learning objectives that are measurable, focused on growth in student learning, and aligned to curriculum standards.
 - Baseline data are also available in the foregoing list of assessment instruments.

- Benchmarks to Monitor Student Growth:
 - Until this point, the key benchmark indicator has been the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), but we are currently reconsidering its use in favor of the COMPASS exam.
 - Another indicator has been student success in passing the GHSGT exams and EOCTs.
- Participation in State-mandated Assessments:
 - Students are transported to the county testing center for scheduled state assessments.
 - The assistant principal and the graduation coach are certified to administer all state-mandated assessments.

4. Actions by leadership, faculty, and staff to ensure performance objectives are met

- Progress Reports:
 - Student progress is monitored through progress reports, generated through Easy Grade Pro.
 - These reports are completed and distributed every three weeks, indicating if students exceed, meet, or fall below expectations for required work.
 - The result is twelve benchmark indicators per student per year.
 - Recent (Fall 2013) modifications to Easy Grade Pro now enable parents to access their children's reports, indicating total Performance Objectives (POs) met/earned and a student's current percentile grade.
- Focus of Curriculum:
 - The curriculum is focused on motivating and teaching our distinct student population, particularly those who have not been successful in traditional educational settings.
 - The school will accomplish its mission by following the standards and guidelines of the CCGPS and CCRPI through individualized, differentiated instruction, utilizing both traditional and innovative practices.
- Educational Innovations:
 - Through our non-traditional approach, students are allowed to work at a pace that reflects their ability, prior preparation, and individual skill sets;
 - Class numbers are smaller than those of conventional classrooms;
 - Students may complete the required number of performance objectives (POs) and move to the next grade level as soon as this occurs;
 - Online course materials (such as Study Island, A+, USA Test Prep, and Georgia Virtual School courses);
 - Ongoing acquisition of technology: iPads, Smart Boards, ELMOs, computer lab;
 - Extensive experiential and hands-on teaching opportunities;

- Interdisciplinary projects;
 - Writing across the curriculum;
 - Saturday school;
 - Summer school;
 - Night school;
 - After-school tutorials;
 - Achievement incentives and rewards;
 - Seat-time waivers and flex-time in special situations;
 - Work-study and externships;
 - Dual enrollment at area university and technical college campuses;
 - Student tutoring program in its fifteenth year: Students Taking Education Positively (S.T.E.P);
 - Ongoing involvement with PeaceJam, an international program partnering students with Noble Peace Prize laureates and college mentors, promoting peace and humanitarian involvement;
 - Habitat for Humanity;
 - Humane Society;
 - Adopt-a-stream;
 - Bio-diesel technology research project;
 - Archery;
 - John D. Archbold Memorial Hospital internship program;
 - Affiliation with the Georgia Department of Labor;
 - Art projects with the Thomasville Center for The Arts;
 - Student Support Team.
- Increasing Student Achievement through Innovation:
 - Cross-cultural experiential experiences expand the awareness and perspective of our students.
 - Students may spend additional time in certain classes if necessary.
 - Differentiated instruction allows more one-to-one time with teachers.
 - Performance Objectives (POs) earned in some courses may be applied in other courses.
 - The variety of teaching modalities helps prevent boredom.
 - Hands-on activities enable application of knowledge and skills in other contexts.
 - The PO-based approach offers students some sense of control over their performance and productivity.
 - Students do not fail tests or courses; rather they are rewarded for meeting objectives, not punished for failing to do so.
 - Students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery.

- Innovations Appropriate to Bishop Hall:
 - Students come to BHCS because some elements of the educational process or their personal learning styles were not fully facilitating their academic success.
 - BHCS is required to be different in order to meet their specific needs.
 - Flexibility, technology, travel, physical involvement, variety, and ingenuity are necessary to engage this current generation of students whose media-saturated, high-intensity culture both stimulates and distracts them continuously.
- Teacher-Student Ratio and Rationale:
 - Our currently projected eighteen-to-one student-teacher ratio allows teachers to work more consistently with individual students.
 - The small size of the school creates a more intimate, family-like environment.
 - If students understand that faculty and staff care about them as individuals, they tend to be more open to the programs of learning and to the efforts made on their behalf.
- Satisfying Requirements:
 - Bishop Hall adheres to the state-mandated requirements for graduation.
 - Students must earn twenty-three credits and pass all state-mandated examinations.
 - Precise notation of credits and maintenance of transcripts by the assistant principal ensures that all requirements are completed.

5. Educating Special Populations:

- Bishop Hall has a special education teacher on staff and will bring in other county special education teachers as needed.
- The school will provide state and federally mandated services for students with disabilities in the same manner.
- The district will provide ESOL teachers to assist English Language Learners.
- Gifted and talented students will naturally benefit from programs and approaches that rely upon creative or challenging options within the curriculum.
- The faculty is comprised of certified teachers.

6. Waivers:

- Under the provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Bishop Hall will operate under this waiver from certain provisions of NCLB:
 - Eliminate AYP.
 - Eliminate Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) and replace them with State Performance Targets (SPTs).
 - Replace “Needs Improvement” with Reward, Priority, Focus, Alert levels.
 - Develop and apply CCRPI guidelines and findings.
- The following are among the exemptions utilized under the “broad flexibility” waiver:

- Seat-time waiver
- Scheduling waiver
- School calendar waiver
- Administration waiver
- Faculty credentials waiver (if necessary). BHCS strives to employ only highly qualified teachers.

7. Accreditations

- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Georgia Accrediting Commission

ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES, PLANS, AND WAIVERS

7. Organizational Goals and Measures

Organizational Goal 1
The governing board of Bishop Hall Charter School understands that its responsibility is to carry out the school’s mission autonomously, while also recognizing that Bishop Hall is subject to the authority of the local school board as required by Georgia law.
<u>Performance Objective 1:</u> To ensure the implementation of the public school program authorized by the school’s charter through policy development and organizational oversight in the areas of personnel, finance resource allocation, curriculum, and operations.
<u>Performance Objective 2:</u> To ensure that the governing board members receive the training necessary to carry out their role as directors, concerning fiscal, academic, and legal matters. Measured by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of attendance at annual training sessions
Organizational Goal 2
To maintain, through effective administrative procedures, a positive environmental culture that will attract, retain, and graduate students by employing and retaining highly qualified teachers.
<u>Performance Objective 1:</u> To offer educational opportunities and social assistance to area students who require a program adaptable to their needs. Measured by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving an enrollment of 200 students • Meeting the standards of the CCGPS • Receiving a CCRPI rating that reflects the fulfillment of the school’s mission. • Achieving a 100% graduation rate and pass rate on state-mandated tests by 2018-2019
<u>Performance Objective 2:</u> To provide appropriate compensation and administrative support to a faculty whose competence and dedication are reflected in superior evaluations through measures required by the state and the district. Measured by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) evaluation instrument • Faculty feedback provided to administrators • Minutes and recorded outcomes of the School Leadership Team (speaking for the faculty) to establish or improve policies or implement change.

Performance Objective 3: To meet the expectations of parents while fulfilling the needs of students.

Measured by:

- Surveys completed by parents
- Input from parents at open-house gatherings and parent conferences
- Evaluation instruments completed by students
- Records of social, medical, and behavioral services provided by the student support team, as well as shared observation of the Student Support Team during faculty meetings

Performance Objective 4: To study, understand, and apply the principles of Tribal Leadership in the learning environment to support the institution's mission or "noble cause," by engaging disaffected students and promoting collegial relations among teachers and staff.

Measured qualitatively by:

- Faculty and administration input at faculty meetings regarding the stages at which students are operating and methods of building dyads and triads in each tribal unit
- Successful adaptation of students to the Bishop Hall philosophy and methods
- Informal observation and discussion
- Perceptions voiced by parents, community leaders, and local media

8. Organizational Innovations

- Among the core innovations employed by Bishop Hall since its inception are the following: performance-based learning, reduced class size; flexible seat time (based on circumstances), a highly qualified faculty, and a strong student support team. These elements will remain, in addition to those that follow:
 - The school Leadership Team will work in tandem with the headmaster and assistant headmaster and faculty to establish new policies and to maintain or improve existing ones.
 - The faculty will align standards and practices to the CCRPI and CCGPS.
 - Principles of Tribal Leadership (noble cause, goals and objectives, values, resources, and behaviors) will serve as core elements of the new charter. (See Exhibit G.)
 - Dual enrollment partnerships with Southwest Georgia Technical College and Thomas University will require modification of curricular requirements, attendance, calendar, and dress code policies.
 - Student enrollment will be increased to 150, with a projected maximum total of 200 by 2019.
 - The addition of an eighth grade (some of whom may be overage) will require adjustment of intake procedures and teaching methods as students prepare for the CRCT and grade eight writing assessment.

- The CrossRoads alternative educational facility and program will maintain an adjunct relationship to Bishop Hall, requiring coordination of enrollment or reassignment of students who may move between these schools.
 - Additional faculty will supplement academic instruction where required. The anticipated increase of students with IEP or 504 designations has required the employment of a special education teacher.
 - A Life Skills Certificate may be offered to special education students who are unable to meet the graduation requirements.
 - The Student Support Team will conduct interviews and create and maintain social histories on all students. These will be made available to faculty.
 - Expansion of the virtual learning component will increase enrollment and will require that students enrolled in the virtual program schedule regular meetings with faculty.
 - Thomas County Schools' buses will continue to provide transportation for our students.
 - Students who fail the COMPASS entry test at SWGTC will be transported to the P.R.E.P. Academy at Thomas County Central High School in order to earn credit in one of the post high school readiness options.
 - A fine arts component through the Thomasville Center for the Arts will assist students in completing a fine arts pathway.
 - A new schedule, dismissing students at 2:30, will provide time for interviews and conferences with enrolled students, as well as additional after-school learning opportunities for students who may require extra time with their studies.
 - The primary school facility will be a new building in a new location, 220 North Pinetree Blvd., and will be maintained by Thomas County Schools. (See Memorandum of Understanding, Exhibit C.)
 - The high-tech nature and design of the new school will allow us to offer after-school assistance to students in the area, such as home-schoolers, virtual students, and traditional students from other systems seeking additional help.
- **How innovations will increase organizational effectiveness**
 - These innovations will increase organizational effectiveness by allowing adjustments due to modifications incorporated into the new charter.
 - The composition of the board of directors reflects current GADOE charter school requirements disallowing system- or school-related administrators from serving as voting board members.
 - BHCS will be relocating to a newly constructed school building, designed to complement our school's mission and purpose.
 - Proximity to the technical college will allow students to move between our sites; schedules should therefore coincide.

- The dress code for BHCS upperclassmen will be relaxed to allow our students to blend with SWGTC students.
 - Our performance-based criteria will allow course requirement substitutions within our curriculum.
 - Tribal Leadership values, particularly regarding courtesy/respect, will instill in our students an understanding of appropriate behavior in institutions of higher learning.
 - The new school will accommodate at least 200 students, including eighth graders and special education students, requiring expansion of class numbers, course offerings, and qualified faculty.
 - The high-tech environment will contain a space that may serve as a regional learning center for other non-traditional students (home-schoolers and virtual-schoolers).
 - The flexible schedule will also serve young mothers or working students.
 - Students who do not complete their studies in four years will now be able to continue under the CCRPI guidelines that allow them to graduate in five years without penalty.
 - Similarly, admitting overage eighth graders will give them the additional instruction required to complete the CRCT and writing assessment before attempting to enter ninth grade.
 - Requiring post-entry interviews will allow teachers and support personnel to explain to students our philosophy and methods.
 - Social histories will provide faculty with the additional insight required when dealing with at-risk students, whose personal situations often impact significantly upon their ability to meet school requirements and adapt successfully to the Bishop Hall culture.
 - Expanding our scope to include a wider range of students who have struggled with traditional approaches will necessarily require not only the flexibility we have used in the past but also even more creativity and innovation in order to assist this new generation of students in mastering the skills and acquiring the knowledge needed to graduate.
- **Appropriateness of innovations**

The primary reason innovative approaches are appropriate may be found in our core mission: to enable students who have not been successful in traditional schools the opportunity to earn diplomas through other educational approaches. Such a purpose can only be achieved through flexibility. Nevertheless, Bishop Hall must still ensure that its graduates meet the same standards as traditional students, even though they often come to us reading or working math at elementary grade levels. Bishop Hall has the distinction of being the only charter school with Title I Whole School status, so student academic issues are obviously compounded by social, cultural, and emotional ones as well. Some of our students may be autistic, pregnant, formerly incarcerated, dropouts, over-aged, socially inept, or financially in need. This school exists because many of our students live nonstandard lives, yet we are judged by standardized criteria. Therefore, we require the freedom to try things differently.

9. No Additional Waivers Are Requested

GOVERNANCE

10. Describe how an autonomous governing board will make decisions for the school.

While the board recognizes that Bishop Hall Charter School is subject to the authority of the local school board to the extent provided by Georgia law (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065(b)(2)), Bishop Hall's governing board is autonomous in that it is not controlled by, nor are its members appointed by, the local school board or other outside entity. Bishop Hall's governing board understands that it is responsible for carrying out the school's mission and ensuring the implementation of the public school program authorized by the school's charter through policy development and organizational oversight in the areas of personnel, finance, resource allocation, curriculum, and operations. (See Amendment to Articles of Incorporation, Exhibit A and By-laws, Exhibit B.)

- **Describe the composition of the governing board. How and when will board members be selected?**
 - Bishop Hall's governing board consists of 7 members. It is a self-perpetuating board, and new board members are elected by the board at the board's annual meeting. Bishop Hall recognizes the value of experience and continuity of leadership. Therefore, board members serve 3 year terms that are staggered, which avoids a complete overhaul of the board membership annually. Board members are limited to 3 consecutive terms in order to ensure fresh energy, ideas, and appropriate expertise through new members. In order to ensure diversity and expertise on the board, the Board Development Committee seeks input for board member nominations from the president of the local university, the president of the local technical college, and the local office of the Georgia Department of Labor.

REFERENCES:

Bylaws, Article II, Section 2: Number of Directors

Bylaws, Article II, Section 3: Election and Term

Bylaws, Article IV, Section 2: Standing Committees - Board Development Committee

- **Describe your plan for ensuring that you maintain a diverse board with broad skill sets.**
 - See above.
 - Also, the Board Development Committee—one of the board's standing committees—is tasked with (1) analyzing the skills and experience needed on the board, (2) recruiting individuals who possess the needed expertise and who can commit sufficient time to serve Bishop Hall Charter School, and (3) presenting a slate of qualified individuals to the full board for consideration and election. Per the school's bylaws, the Board Development Committee meets at least 5 times per year.

REFERENCE:

Bylaws, Article IV, Section 2: Standing Committees-Board Development Committee

- **Describe how and why governing board members may be removed.**
 - A board member may be removed for cause by an affirmative vote of 2/3 of the remaining board members. A board member who is being considered for removal shall

receive at least 7 days' notice of the proposed action of removal and shall have an opportunity to address the board prior to any vote on removal.

- A board member may resign by submitting a resignation in writing to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

REFERENCE:

Bylaws, Article II, Section 11: Resignation and Removal of Directors

- **Describe the governing board's function, duties, and role in the areas of budget, resource allocation, personnel decisions, establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, curriculum, and school operations.**

- Budget: The governing board sets and approves the school's yearly budget for implementation by the school's administration. The Finance Committee of the board, which meets monthly from September through May, and additionally as necessary, collaborates with the school's CEO and CFO to prepare an annual budget for consideration by the entire board. This committee also works with the school's CFO and CEO to develop a 5-year financial forecast and long-range financial plans.
- Resource Allocation: One of the board's foremost responsibilities is to provide adequate resources for the school to fulfill its mission, vision, and major goals. The deployment of those resources on a day-to-day and month-to-month basis is the job of the school's CEO, who ultimately answers to governing board. The board monitors the CEO's effectiveness in allocating the school's resources through regular reports from the CEO at its board meetings.
- Personnel Decisions: One of the most critical decisions made by the governing board is the selection of the school's CEO, who serves as the school's top administrator/principal/headmaster. It is the duty of the CEO to recruit and hire qualified faculty and staff with the approval and consent of the board. It is the board's duty to ensure that the school's CEO has the moral and professional support he needs to carry out his duties, and it is the role of the board to conduct periodic performance evaluations of the school's CEO. The board's duties regarding personnel also include the establishment and revision of personnel policies in consultation with the school's CEO, who is responsible for implementing such policies.
- Establishing and Monitoring School Improvement Goals: It is the duty of the board to establish school improvement goals and to monitor the school's progress toward meeting those goals by regular reporting from and discussions with the school's CEO.
- Curriculum: The development and delivery of educational programs is carried out by the school's administration, faculty, and staff within the guidelines and policies established by the governing board. The governing board monitors and assesses the effectiveness of the school's curriculum by reviewing and analyzing reports provided by the school's administrators.
- School Operations: The governing board guides school operations through the establishment of operational policies, standards, and practices. The board's role in day-to-day operations of the school is minimal. The board entrusts the oversight of day-to-day school operations to the CEO/principal/headmaster of the school.

- **Provide a plan and timeline for ongoing governance training to be provided in order to build the capacity needed to make decisions in the above-mentioned areas.**
 - Bishop Hall’s governing board acknowledges the need for continuing education on effective governance strategies in the above-mentioned areas. The school’s bylaws provide that the Board Development Committee shall conduct new member board training and other board training and education as needed. The board has researched and determined that charter school organizations such as the National Charter School Resource Center offer free webinars for charter school board members concerning the above-mentioned areas. Bishop Hall’s board will take advantage of these relevant, cost-effective training options on a regular basis as directed by its Board Development Committee. The board also will train new members through in-house orientation covering basic board member responsibilities and committee work. Moreover, the board plans to take advantage of any charter school board training opportunities offered by the Georgia Department of Education.

REFERENCE:

Bylaws, Article IV, Section 2: Standing Committees - Board Development Committee

- **Disclose any potential conflicts of interest and describe how the governing board will ensure that current and future board members avoid conflicts of interest.**
 - Currently, there are no known conflicts of interest. In order to ensure that current and future board members avoid conflicts of interest, Bishop Hall Charter School, Inc.’s bylaws contain a conflict of interest provision that holds Bishop Hall’s board members to the same conflicts of interest standards as local school board members.

REFERENCE:

Bylaws, Article II, Section 15: C

CONTRACTS WITH EDUCATIONAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

11. Bishop hall will not employ the services of an educational service provider.

FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES, PLANS, AND WAIVERS

12. Financial Goals and Measures

Financial Goal 1
Maximize QBE funding by managing FTE to ensure a stable revenue source from the state of Georgia.
Measure 1: Annual audits
Measure 2: Oversight by the Board of Directors Chairperson
Measure 3: Oversight by the system CFO
Measure 4: Oversight by the CEO (Headmaster)
Financial Goal 2
Continue to meet the requirements as a Title I school to have access to federal funds for disadvantaged students that attend Bishop Hall.
Measure 1: Annual audits
Measure 2: Oversight by the Board of Directors Chairperson
Measure 3: Oversight by the system CFO
Measure 4: Oversight by the CEO (Headmaster)
Measure 5: Administrative oversight by the system Title I coordinator
Financial Goal 3
Maintain a balanced budget each year without accessing funds from the Bishop Hall Charitable Fund.
Measure 1: The fund was established during the early part of the school’s existence for the benefit of Bishop Hall Charter School but is not owned by the school or the Thomas County School System.
Measure 2: The Bishop Hall Charitable Fund is maintained at the Southwest Georgia Community Foundation, a measure that allows the value of the fund to remain relatively stable.
Measure 3: As of June 30, 2013, the value of the fund was \$737,439.

- Under the financial oversight of the Board of Directors, Bishop Hall will continue to exercise fiscal discipline and undergo annual audits. The school thereby expects to maintain its current balanced budget, particularly due to ongoing support from area foundations, increased enrollment and FTEs, access to SPLOST funding to construct a new building, and Title I supplemental funding.

- We will continue to request \$214,000 annually from at least four local foundations, so that at the end of the charter term, the school expects to have at least \$800,000 in reserve, with the intention that it will not drop below \$500,000. These yearly contributions have been a constant for the past fourteen years.
- We will move into and operate from a new building adjoining the campus of SWGTC. This state-of-the-art building should reduce expenditures for such things as utilities and maintenance.
- We will continue to build enrollment from 110 to an anticipated 200 by attracting students from nearby districts and offering virtual and dual-enrollment programs, all of which will significantly increase FTE funding.
- Additionally, the school-wide Title I program will continue to bring in \$30-40,000 annually, and administration and faculty will engage in grant writing on the state and national levels. These unique innovations will continue to support the premise held by both the community and the foundations that our higher graduation rate and lower dropout rate enhance the quality of community life.
- See Five-year Budget. Exhibit D.

13. Actions to achieve financial performance objectives

- Maintain the excellent relationship with local private foundations that have been an integral part of the charter school since its inception.
- Annual donations from the foundations allow Bishop Hall to maintain its unique instructional flexibility and innovative practices.
- Collaborate with the Thomas County School System in applying for recurring and one-time grants from the Georgia Department of Education, the U.S. Educational Department, and other private sources.
- Minimize operating expenses by using maintenance, technology, food service, transportation, central service and custodial staff of the Thomas County School System as much as possible, similar to previous operating arrangements.

14. Actions in the financial plan requiring a waiver

- Bishop hall requests a waiver from the requirement of submitting the annual audit by September 30th each year.
- The audit is performed by auditors from the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts, who typically complete the audit by March 1st of the following year.

STUDENT ADMISSIONS

15. How students will be admitted to the charter school

- Attendance zone
 - While the primary attendance zone of Bishop Hall is the Thomas County School District, students from other districts in the surrounding area may also enroll.
- Enrollment priorities pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a)(1) that apply:
 - A sibling of a student enrolled in the start-up charter school
 - A sibling of a student enrolled in another local school designated in the charter
 - A student whose parent or guardian is a member of the governing board of the charter school or is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee at the charter school
 - Students matriculating from a local school designated in the charter
 - In order to ensure that students nearer to graduation are afforded the opportunity to complete their studies on time, our priorities favor twelfth graders over eleventh; eleventh over tenth; and tenth over ninth.
 - A lottery would come into effect only if limited slots were available and there were more applications than slots.
 - Following the enrollment procedure, each student and a parent or guardian will participate in a social history interview in order to determine the student's specific needs.
- Rules and procedures that will govern admission and registration.
 - The charter school will serve students in grades eight through twelve, ages 13-21. (Students with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) may attend until their twenty-second birthday.)
 - Any student who wishes to enroll from the county, surrounding districts, or even statewide via the virtual program, will be given equal opportunity to attend.
 - Bishop Hall intends to support students at risk of non-completion of high school, such as expelled students, dropouts, pregnant students or young mothers, and students needing non-traditional approaches to learning.
 - Students will be informed of their right to enroll by local middle or high school staff, the local board of education or tribunals, community members, peers, local media, and parents.
- Application and selection process:
 - Openings are announced in the schools and by the media
 - Student and parents inform the administration of the desire to attend.
 - Student and parent/guardian complete the application forms to verify residence.
 - Students are randomly selected, up to school capacity.
 - If space is available, the student is notified of formal enrollment
 - If space is not available, the student's name is placed on the waiting list.

- Students on the waiting list are encouraged to enroll in the local school until space becomes available for admittance.
- Reaching students representative of the racial and socioeconomic diversity in the school system
 - Racial and socioeconomic diversity are not issues at Bishop Hall.
 - Regarding ethnic minorities (excluding white, not of Hispanic origin), our numbers regarding race are consistently higher than those of the district high school. TCCHS: 38.99%. BHCS: 46.14%. CrossRoads: 60.44% (now part of BHCS).
 - Our free and reduced lunch numbers are higher than those at the district high school.
- Recruitment of students to maintain or increase enrollment
 - We anticipate an increase in enrollment due to the opening of our new high-tech school location next to the local technical college, Southwest Georgia Technical College.
 - Our partnership with Thomas University will increase visibility and will attract more students with a desire to attend college.
 - We will advertise in the media that dual enrollment at the technical college will yield an associate's degree upon completion of high school.
 - The new school will provide a transition from secondary to post-secondary education, particularly for students coming from a virtual or home-school environment

FACILITIES

16. Description of school facility

- The Thomas County Schools system is in the design phase to construct a new Bishop Hall Charter School building on one of the system's campus locations (the former middle school that now houses the administrative offices of the system).
- The new structure consists of approximately 22,000 square feet, containing eight classrooms, one full science lab, one computer lab, a media center, and a full kitchen and cafeteria. (See Exhibit E. Floor Plan and Architectural Rendering.)
- The building also has office spaces for the principal, assistant principal, guidance counselor, graduation coach, social services, a clinic, and a teachers' workroom.
- The location of the structure on one of the system's existing campuses will give Bishop Hall students access to a full-size gymnasium and track for their physical education needs.
- The facility's location is 220 North Pinetree Blvd. Thomasville, Georgia 31792.
- The facility will be a newly constructed building; the opening is planned to correspond with the beginning date of the new charter.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the current facility has been approved and will apply to the new facility as well. It is provided as Exhibit C.
- Total proposed facility cost: 3-3.5 million dollars.
- Certificate of Occupancy (CO) for the facility:
 - Yes, we have a CO for the current facility. (See Exhibit H.)
 - A new CO will be available when the proposed building is completed. Projected date, May 15, 2014.
- Emergency Safety Plan for the proposed facility pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1185:
 - Yes, we have an emergency safety plan and it is provided as Exhibit F.

ASSURANCES FORM AND
SIGNATURE SHEET

The law requires your school provide assurances that it will do certain things and comply with certain laws. This Assurance Form enumerates all of these requirements and, when you submit this signed Signature Sheet with this Assurance Form as part of your Start-up Charter School Application Package, you are providing the legal assurance that your charter school understands and will do these things. This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the school.

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter for Bishop Hall Charter School located in Thomas County is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that if awarded a charter the school:

1. Shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations;
2. Shall be subject to the control and management of the local board of the local school system in which the charter school is located, as provided in the charter and in a manner consistent with the Constitution;
3. Shall not discriminate against any student or employee on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, national origin, gender, disability or age;
4. Shall be subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of the physical health and safety of school students, employees, and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the prevention of unlawful conduct;
5. Shall be subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A § 20-2-1050 requiring a brief period of quiet reflection;
6. Shall ensure that the charter school and its governing board are subject to the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq. and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq.;
7. Shall ensure that the charter school's governing board members may only receive compensation for their reasonable and actual expenses incurred in connection with performance of their duties;
8. Shall ensure that the charter school's governing board adopts and abides by a conflicts of interest policy;
9. Shall ensure that all teachers will be certified or highly qualified in compliance with No Child Left Behind;
10. Shall comply with the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-14-30 through § 20-14-41 and federal accountability requirements, and participate in statewide assessments;
11. Shall adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including the IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as applicable;
12. Shall provide state and federally mandated services for English Language Learners, as applicable;
13. Shall provide for supplemental educational services as required by federal law and pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03, and for remediation in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01;

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

This Charter School Application, Assurance Form, and attached Exhibits were approved by the Thomas County Board of Education on the 15th day of October, 2013.

Authorized Representative, Charter School

Date

Chair, Local Board of Education

Date

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

Authorized Representative, Charter School

Date

Chair, Local Board of Education

Date