

Charter School Renewal Application

**For Schools Seeking
Renewal from DCSD and
the State Board of
Education
To Operate in School Year 19/20**

CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECKLIST

Your Charter School Renewal Application Package must comply with the following submission procedures.

An Application Package includes an original and two copies of the following items:

- ☐ **APPLICATION COVER SHEET** (Use the form on page 7; the form may not be altered in any way).
- ☐ **CHARTER APPLICATION** (Your answers to the questions posed on pages 8-11).
 - ☐ The Application is limited to 75 double-spaced pages using an 11-point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins with a header showing the school's name and a footer showing consecutive page numbers and the submission date.
 - ☐ The original must be signed in blue ink. Stamped signatures will not be accepted.
- ☐ **EXHIBITS** (See list of required Exhibits below on page 12-13).
 - ☐ Required Exhibits should be as limited in size as possible.
 - ☐ All Exhibits must be tabbed both electronically AND physically.
- ☐ **AFFIDAVIT** (Use the Affidavit Form below on page 14; the Form may not be altered in any way).
 - ☐ The original must be signed in blue ink; stamped signatures will not be accepted.
 - ☐ Electronic copy of assurances must be signed. Blank copies will not be accepted.
- ☐ **ASSURANCES FORM AND SIGNATURE SHEET** (Use the Assurances Form and Signature Sheet below on pages 15-17; the Form and the Sheet may not be altered in any way).
 - ☐ The original must be signed in blue ink; stamped signatures will not be accepted.
 - ☐ Electronic copy of assurances must be signed. Blank copies will not be accepted.
- ☐ **DOCUMENTATION OF VOTE – *FOR CONVERSIONS ONLY*** (Use the form on page 18)
 - ☐ The original must be signed in blue ink; stamped signatures will not be accepted.
- ☐ Your Application Package must be bound with a rubber band and use dividers for sections, exhibits, and appendices.
- ☐ Your Application Package must also include 10 USB drives that includes a:
 - ☐ Microsoft Word version of your Application Cover Sheet
 - ☐ Microsoft Word versions of your Application and Exhibits
 - ☐ Exhibits and Appendices should be hyperlinked within the Application.
 - ☐ PDF Version of your Application Packet in the following order: Cover Sheet, Application, signed Assurances Form, and Exhibits
 - ☐ PDF version of your Locally-Approved Charter School Partners Roles and Responsibilities chart
 - ☐ Excel version of your completed Budget Templates

CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL APPLICATION COVER PAGES

Check One: ☒ Start-up Renewal ☐ Conversion Renewal

When was the original charter term start date? July 1, 2014

How many charter terms has the school been in existence? 1

Name of Charter School: Tapestry Public Charter School

Name of the Georgia nonprofit corporation that currently holds the charter:

Tapestry School Incorporated

Local school system in which charter school is physically located: DeKalb County School District

Contact Information for the Governing Board Chair

Contact Person: Tonna Harris-Bosselmann Board Chair
Name Title

Contact Address: 3130 Raymond Drive, Doraville, GA 30340

Telephone Number: 404-384-6104

Fax Number: (470) 268-6403

E-mail Address: tonna@tapestrycharter.org

Contact Information for the Person Filling out this Application

Contact Person: Barbara Boone Principal
Name Title

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CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL APPLICATION

Italicized items reflect that which is specific to DeKalb County School District.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Name of Charter School: Tapestry Public Charter School

Proposed Charter Term Length: 5 years

Current Grade Range: 6-12 Grade range at the end of the charter term: 6-12

Expected enrollment at the end of the charter term: 266

This application was approved by _____ Local Board of Education on _____, 201__

For each year of the NEW charter term, indicate the number of students the charter school plans to serve.

	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Year 1	32	32	32	42	42	38	36	254
Year 2	32	32	32	42	42	40	38	258
Year 3	32	32	32	42	42	42	40	262
Year 4	32	32	32	42	42	42	42	264
Year 5	32	32	32	42	42	43	43	266

1. State the charter school's mission and describe why this initiative is important to the *students* it will serve. *Be specific about the needs of the students, as well as the expectations the District and general community holds for a new school.* Also provide a brief description of any defining features of the school. Include how stakeholders were involved in the petition process and will continue participating. (350 words or less)
2. Describe the charter school's academic program, specifically focusing on why it is innovative in *DeKalb County School District*, and more specifically, *about the school students currently attend.* How will this school be academically different from the traditional public schools within the community? Include mention of any waivers of state law and SBOE rule that are needed to be able to implement the academic program. Be sure to describe any special characteristics of your charter school, such as a special population or some other feature or features which enhance educational opportunities. (350 words or less)
3. Describe the charter school's organizational structure, specifically focusing on its innovation and need for flexibility, its general partnership structure with an educational service provider (ESP) (if applicable), *DCSD and GaDOE*, and the school's community interest and need. (350 words or less)

PAST PERFORMANCE

Complete and attach as Exhibit 5 the Charter School's Annual Report available on the GaDOE's Charter Schools Division website to show the school's performance during each year of your current charter term and include with your charter school renewal application. This Annual Report will be presented to the *DeKalb Board of Education* and the State Board of Education with your charter petition, so please ensure it is accurate

1. Page 5 (in narrative) Provide a narrative describing how the charter school performed in meeting the academic and organizational goals set forth in its current charter contract. In your narrative:
 - ☐ Address the school's performance in each year of your current charter term.
 - ☐ *Address the school's performance in comparison to traditional schools.*
 - ☐ *Address the school's performance in comparison to state expectations.*
 - ☐ *You are urged to use the DCSD Charter School Annual Report Poverty Regression Analysis.*
 - ☐ You are urged to include any supporting charts, tables, or graphs that provide quantitative data.
 - ☐ If your charter school did not meet all of the goals in its charter contract, explain any mitigating factors to which this can be attributed, and explain how the school plans to address them in the upcoming charter renewal term requested.
2. Page 27 Describe the school's current financial situation. In your description:
 - ☐ Include an explanation of financial results
 - ☐ Detail any financial successes or struggles the school experienced during the current charter term. Include any instances of fraudulent behavior or accusations of fraudulent behavior by school staff, governing board members, or anyone else associated with the school. *Merely meeting the minimum expectations of an audit is not an acceptable success.*
 - ☐ Explain how the school will address any struggles discussed above as well as any outstanding debts. Explain how the school will allocate any surplus funds.
3. Page 30 Provide a brief overview of the school's current governance structure. In your description, you must include:
 - ☐ Specific examples of decisions the governing board has made on behalf of the school, *within the following areas of authority; financial, resource allocation, personnel, curriculum and instruction, school improvement, and school operations.*
 - ☐ Specific examples of decisions the school leader has made on behalf of the school;
 - ☐ How the governing board holds the school leader, any charter partners (ESP/CMO/EMO), and any independent contractors accountable; and
 - ☐ The governing board's training program for the current and proposed charter term. Attach as Exhibit 6 a copy of the board's Governance Training Plan.
 - ☐ *Full responses to the Governing Board Observations conducted by the DCSD Charter Office as Exhibit 30.*
4. Page 36 Describe how the school provides state- and federally-mandated services to **students with disabilities**. Reciting the requirements of law and rule is insufficient. Your description must include the school's practices and procedures to:
 - ☐ Evaluate and identify students with disabilities;

- ☐ Develop, review, and revise Individualized Education Programs (IEPs);
 - ☐ Integrate special education into the general education program;
 - ☐ Ensure that the school facility meets the requirements of other related laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504;
 - ☐ Address student discipline;
 - ☐ Handle programming disputes involving parents;
 - ☐ Ensure confidentiality of special education records;
 - ☐ Purchase services from special education vendors or to contract with your local district to provide a continuum of special education services and how this arrangement will work; and
 - ☐ Secure technical assistance and training.
 - ☐ *Ensure the adequate number and qualifications of SPED staff.*
5. Page 50 Describe how the charter school provides state- and federally-mandated services for English Learners (ELs). Reciting the requirements of law and rule is insufficient. Your description must include the diagnostic methods or instruments that are used to identify and assess those students, as well as the instructional program that is provided to ELs. *Describe how student progress is monitored post-exit from the ESOL program, including staff roles, frequency, and types of data/documents reviewed. Identify the thresholds for exiting a student from the ESOL program. Indicate what if any supports and services are provided to students in the post-exit phase.*
6. Page 54 Explain how the charter school determines which students need remediation in each core content area, and the frequency in which this is monitored. Describe the methods, strategies, and instructional programs the charter school uses to provide remediation for students at risk for academic failure. *Include how the structure of the day is impacted to provide intentional remediation. Describe your multi-tiered support system (such as RTI), including gifted and talented. The description of the multi-tiered support system should include the specific academic and behavior interventions used for different tiers, who is responsible for such interventions, and for how long and with what frequency certain interventions are tracked prior to referral for special education.*
7. Page 57 Provide the number and percentage of students receiving In-School Suspensions, Out-of-School Suspensions, or Expulsions during the current charter term (e.g., the past 5 years). How does this discipline and dismissal data compare to the [Office of Civil Rights data](#)?

	In-School Suspensions		Out-of-School Suspensions			Expulsions
Ethnicity/Race	Number & Percentage of Total Population					
Latino Hispanic		%		%		%
American Indian		%		%		%
Asian / Pacific Islander		%		%		%
Black / African American		%		%		%
White		%		%		%
Two or More Races		%		%		%
Total Population						

8. Page 60 Describe in detail any difficulties faced during the charter term that were not already addressed above, how the school dealt with such difficulties, and if they remain an issue for the school. Also explain how the school plans to avoid these difficulties during the upcoming charter renewal term.

PROPOSED CHANGES

If the answers given above to questions 1 - 8 reflect a change to any of the following, please provide the rationale for the change:

A. Page 64 **ACADEMIC CHANGES:**

- ☐ The academic program and curriculum.
- ☐ The use of waivers/innovations.
- ☐ School programs – this includes Students with Disabilities, Gifted and Talented, English Learners, etc.
- ☐ Any assessments being used.
- ☐ Any administrative positions.

B. Page 67 **GOVERNANCE CHANGES:**

- ☐ The school's governance structure.
- ☐ The school's governing board composition.
- ☐ The school's relationship with an Educational Service Provider or other Charter Partner.
- ☐ The relationship with the local district.
- ☐ *The increase of diversity among the members.*

C. Page 68 **FINANCIAL CHANGES:**

- ☐ The school's financial structure.
- ☐ The school's CFO.
- ☐ The school's relationship with any major creditors (e.g., landlords, investors etc.)

D. Page 68 **OPERATIONAL CHANGES:**

- ☐ The school's facilities – this should include any proposed expansion or renovations.
- ☐ The school's attendance zone and any enrollment priorities being used (see O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a)(1)).
- ☐ Whether the school will utilize a weighted lottery to provide an increased chance of admission for educationally disadvantaged students pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a)(1) and State Board Rule 160-4-9-.05(2)(g).
- ☐ *Racial and socioeconomic demographics in an effort to align with the District.*
- ☐ Any services provided to students such as transportation, food service, etc.
- ☐ The grades the charter school will serve. Please note this includes adding additional grades or reducing current grades.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Page 70 Briefly describe how the school has and will continue with its proposed changes to serve the needs of its students for the upcoming (renewed) charter term.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1. State the charter school's mission and describe why this initiative is important to the students it will serve. *Be specific about the needs of the students, as well as the expectations the District and general community hold for a new school.* Also provide a brief description of any defining features of the school. Include how stakeholders were involved in the petition process and will continue participating. (350 words or less)**

Tapestry Public Charter School serves students in grades 6-12. Our mission is to offer an inclusive, individualized learning environment that is academically engaging, both for neurotypical students and those on the autism spectrum, and to create a positive school culture that empowers all students to take possession of their innate talents and become creative builders of their own futures.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 59 individuals will receive a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. Because of the dramatic increase in the number of children with autism, schools must learn the best ways to effectively serve students with autism. Tapestry is a trailblazer, aiming to create an inclusive model from which others can learn.

At Tapestry, students have developed a respect for individual differences as we embed strategies to support students on the autism spectrum in an engaging, supportive environment that also engenders success in their neurotypical peers. Additional benefits of Tapestry's inclusive learning environment include:

- Georgia Milestones scores for students with disabilities that exceed district averages
- Strong growth at the high school level as evidenced by 2016 and 2017 College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) Progress Points
- Minimization of stigmas related to learning differences
- Co-teaching model that provides extra support in the classroom and reduces the student-teacher ratio, allowing for more individualized attention
- Lessons that are presented using varied techniques through highly differentiated instruction

- Increased staff interactions promoting shared ownership of student growth and success

Tapestry values high levels of engagement from stakeholders at every level. Parents and community partners serve on the Board and volunteer at the school; partners provide professional development for staff and enrichment opportunities for students. Tapestry receives regular feedback from the school community through principal coffees, parent Q&A nights, grade-level meetings, and annual surveys. Community input regularly fuels changes at the school and thus the renewal petition. The renewal draft was submitted and discussed extensively during the public board meeting on July 16, 2018. All input from stakeholders collected during the school year was used to inform the content of this petition.

- 2. Describe the charter school's academic program, specifically focusing on why it is innovative in *DeKalb County School District*, and more specifically, about the school students currently attend. How will this school be academically different from the traditional public schools within the community? Include mention of any waivers of state law and SBOE rule that are needed to be able to implement the academic program. Be sure to describe any special characteristics of your charter school, such as a special population or some other feature or features which enhance educational opportunities. (350 words or less)**

Tapestry promotes increased student achievement in an authentic inclusion environment for both neurotypical students and students with autism. Whereas in traditional schools, students with autism may feel marginalized, all students experience full membership and a genuine sense of belonging at Tapestry.

Tapestry integrates the science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics (STEAM) approach to learning, providing access points to student inquiry and critical thinking. As a result, students are not afraid to engage in experiential learning, solve complex problems, and collaborate with their peers. Technology is central at Tapestry; students use personal Chromebooks and a variety of online resources to enhance learning. We are also fully committed to the arts, providing courses in music, art,

and drama for every student and embedding arts concepts in core academic classes. All arts programming is fully inclusive for our diverse students.

There is no other school with a mission to offer a fully inclusive learning environment for students with disabilities, specifically those on the autism spectrum, within the state of Georgia, making Tapestry a truly innovative educational model. Tapestry employs the following academic innovations:

- School with 50% students with disabilities and 50% students without disabilities
- Full inclusion of all students in every extracurricular and academic activity
- Sensory modifications i.e., LED lighting, sound proofing, reduced transitions, and sensory rooms for students with sensitivities
- Structured and predictable environment to reduce executive function challenges
- Professional development on autism and the neuroscience of learning
- Social-emotional learning
- Low student-teacher ratio; small class and school size
- Authentic co-teaching model
- Investigative approach to learning and extending ideas
- Holistic approach to instruction and assessment
- High School block scheduling
- Data-driven flexible grouping in all coursework and content areas
- Individualized Learning Plans
- Robust partnerships that enrich learning

Tapestry requests a broad flexibility waiver to enable school leadership and the board to make swift decisions around programmatic elements to meet the unique needs of students. For example, the use of waivers related to certification, grade spans, vendor selection, school councils, and budgetary allocations have been critical during this charter term.

3. Describe the charter school's organizational structure, specifically focusing on its innovation and need for flexibility, its general partnership structure with an educational service provider (ESP) (if applicable), *DCSD and GaDOE*, and the school's community interest and need. (350 words or less)

Tapestry does not contract with an Educational Service Provider (ESP), and the Governing Board is charged with ensuring the school is compliant with applicable state and federal laws, adhering to the mission/vision of the school, fulfilling the terms of the charter contract, and supervising/supporting the Principal. Tapestry's leadership team is small and consists of the Principal and Assistant Principal who implement the educational model and oversee daily operations. Tapestry's Leadership Team also includes a Special Education Coordinator, Autism Specialist, and one full-time and two part-time counselors. After the first four years of operation, it became apparent through test scores and other measures that our students needed more intense supports around literacy. As a result, Tapestry will integrate a Literacy Specialist into our Leadership Team for the 2018-2019 school year. Flexibility from required grade spans is needed to implement a seamless 6-12 experience with a middle school and high school housed in the same building.

Tapestry has garnered significant community support for our educational model. Partnerships have been established with the Marcus Autism Center, the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum, SENSE Theatre, Georgia State University, Mercer University, Emory University, and the Emory Autism Center. The scope of the partnerships varies between organization, but many encompass professional development/coaching for staff, technical assistance, and student enrichment opportunities.

Through Tapestry's innovative model, strong relationships with parents, and high levels of satisfaction from all stakeholder groups, we annually achieve our target enrollment numbers and have a waitlist of 140 students, demonstrating strong interest from within the community.

PAST PERFORMANCE

Complete and attach as Exhibit 5 the Charter School's Annual Report available on the GaDOE's Charter Schools Division website to show the school's performance during each year of your current charter term and include with your charter school renewal application. This Annual Report will be presented to the *DeKalb Board of Education* and the State Board of Education with your charter petition, so please ensure it is accurate.

[Tapestry's Annual Report is attached as Exhibit 5.](#)

- 1. Provide a narrative describing how the charter school performed in meeting the academic and organizational goals set forth in its current charter contract. In your narrative:**
 - Address the school's performance in each year of your current charter term. Address the school's performance in comparison to traditional schools.**
 - Address the school's performance in comparison to state expectations.**
 - You are urged to use the DCSD Charter School Annual Report Poverty Regression Analysis.**
 - You are urged to include any supporting charts, tables, or graphs that provide quantitative data.**
 - If your charter school did not meet all of the goals in its charter contract, explain any mitigating factors to which this can be attributed, and explain how the school plans to address them in the upcoming charter renewal term requested.**

By way of this application, Tapestry seeks a five-year charter renewal term from both DeKalb County School District (DCSD) and the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE).

Tapestry's curricular design allows all children to thrive, but it is particularly engaging for students diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or other developmental disabilities, who may

not reach their potential in traditional middle and high school environments. Currently, Tapestry's student body is comprised of 55% students with disabilities (SWDs), which is significantly higher than any other school in DeKalb County School District (DCSD). Fully inclusive schools at the secondary level are extremely rare across the country, making successful models difficult to find and replicate. Tapestry was specifically designed to address this educational gap and support the academic achievement of students with varied learning abilities and styles. As a result, Tapestry students are flourishing socially and have developed improved communication skills, greater levels of independence, self-discipline, and a mutual respect for individual differences.

In recognition of the school's accomplishments, Tapestry was awarded a \$225,000 Georgia Charter School Program Dissemination Grant in 2017 to share best practices. Tapestry also received [AdvancEd accreditation in 2017](#), which further validates the strength of the academic program, Board and school level leadership capacity, instructional quality, and viability/effectiveness of strategic partnerships. Tapestry performed exceptionally well on the Effective Learning Environment Observation Tool (ELEOT) of the AdvancEd accreditation rating system as compared to both DeKalb County and all of the schools within the AdvancEd network (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: AdvancEd Accreditation Ratings

	Learning Environments	AEN Avg.	DeKalb	Tapestry
1	Equitable Learning Environment	2.69	2.75	3.31
2	High Expectations Environment	2.80	2.72	3.47
3	Supportive Learning Environment	3.05	3.05	3.56
4	Active Learning Environment	2.93	2.92	3.52
5	Progress Monitoring & Feedback Environment	2.76	2.82	3.53

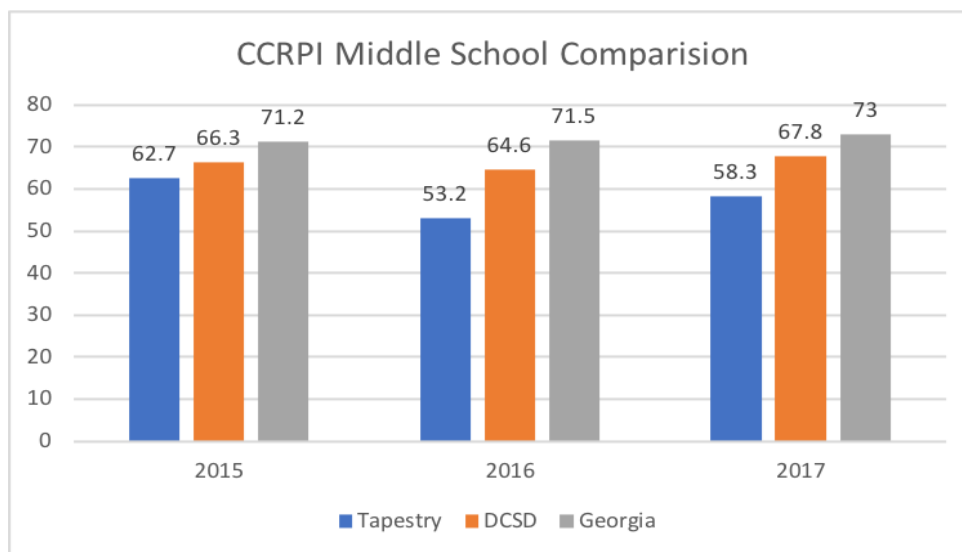
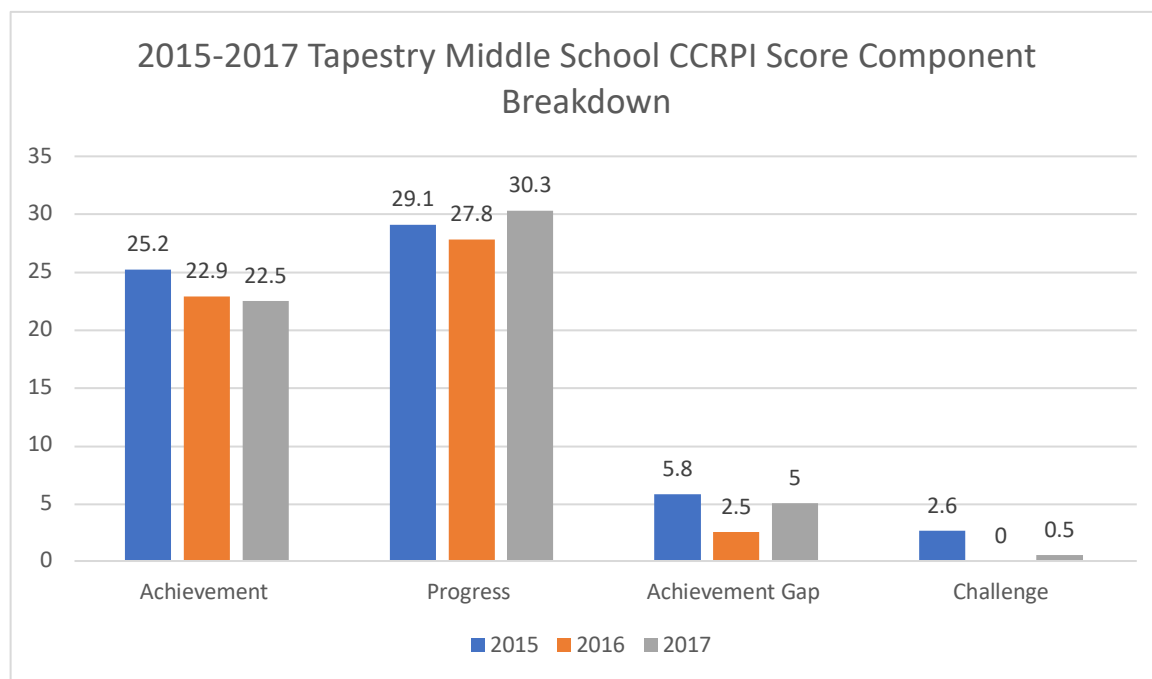
6	Well-Managed Learning Environment	3.12	3.15	3.51
7	Digital Learning Environment	1.86	1.70	3.44

Academic Results

Goal: The Charter School will demonstrate proficiency and/or improvement on the CCRPI.

Middle School

Tapestry's Middle School CCRPI performance as compared to DCSD and Georgia during the course of this charter term is detailed in Figure 2 and Tapestry's CCRPI Component Breakdown is provided as Figure 3:

Figure 2: CCRPI Middle School Comparison*Figure 3: Tapestry 2015-2017 CCRPI Score Component Breakdown*

The drop in our middle school CCRPI score between 2015 and 2016 is the result of a substantial decrease in English Language Arts (ELA) and Science performance, whereas the percentage of students

scoring at the Proficient/Distinguished levels dropped from 41% to 30% respectively resulted in a decrease in our Achievement Points. The decrease in our Progress Points was a result of a decline in the percentage of students who showed typical/high growth in both ELA and science. More specifically, students who scored at the proficient levels tended to show low growth. We also lost challenge points because we did not meet any subgroup target.

Tapestry faced several challenges during this charter term which impeded our ability to meet performance expectations. Approximately 50% of Tapestry middle school students presented two-to-three grade levels behind upon enrollment at the school, thus lacking foundational language, literacy, science, and math skills. This challenge was further compounded, in some cases, when the level of instruction did not contain the necessary rigor to accelerate growth for those students who were significantly behind, largely due to the fact that many teachers were not yet fully versed in the Georgia performance standards or how to define what students should know and be able to do to develop content mastery by the end of the academic year.

As a result of the decline in CCRPI scores between 2015 and 2016, the increase in the percentage of students scoring at the Beginner Learner level on the Milestones, and the low levels of growth experienced by students who were performing at the Proficient level across disciplines, Tapestry teachers received targeted professional development and coaching around deconstructing each standard. Teachers in both the high school and middle school redeveloped all internal assessments (i.e., end-of-unit assessments) to align with Georgia's new Achievement Level Descriptors to ensure students were learning at the cognitive level required to perform at the Proficient/Distinguished levels on the Milestones. Teachers also received targeted support in unit planning to help strike a balance between meeting each student where they were and teaching the standard.

Tapestry's middle school CCRPI score increased between 2016 and 2017. The increase (5.1 points) was greater than both DCSD (3.2 points) and Georgia (1.5 points). We increased our points earned for both ELA (+1.0) and math (+.75) but saw a decrease in earned points for science (-2.6) and social

studies (-2.4). Instead of receiving scores for all middle school students, only fifth and eighth grade scores were used to calculate proficiency in science and social studies, and this change negatively impacted our score. Although we saw an improvement in ELA scores, we lost points for the percentage of our 8th graders with Lexile scores of 1050 and above (-2.6). While we increased our Lexile performance in 2017 for 7th grade, the trend still shows a drop in our students' ability to read at grade level as demonstrated by Figure 4 below, which captures the percentage of students scoring at the Developing, Proficient, and Distinguished Learner levels from 2015-2017 in ELA:

Figure 4: Percent of Students Scoring at Developing or Above in ELA Milestones 2015-2017

ELA	2015	2016	2017
6th Grade	51%	43%	42%
7th Grade	64%	51%	55%
8th Grade	59%	74%	54%

Prior to 2017, Tapestry teachers lacked a comprehensive, intentional intervention plan for students who were reading significantly below grade level upon enrollment. There were also inconsistent instructional practices and methods to effectively teach students how to read across classrooms and grade levels. In 2016, Tapestry implemented the Read Naturally curriculum to better align instruction vertically, however the data showed minimal levels of effectiveness. The focus of the Read Naturally curriculum is on reading fluency and not reading comprehension. Many students on the autism spectrum struggle with inferential reading, which is often a critical element of reading comprehension. Tapestry will implement the Fast Forward Reading program in 2018 which supports the improvement of reading scores and places a greater emphasis on reading comprehension.

In 2017, we increased the amount and type of reading that occurs in each classroom. Reading materials are now more complex to build vocabulary, comprehension, and other literacy skills and targeted assistance is provided for students who struggle through co-teaching and small group instruction.

For the 2018-2019 school year, we have hired a Literacy Specialist who will develop a schoolwide literacy program and provide supports for students who need additional reading interventions at the Tier 2 Response to Intervention (RTI) level. The Literacy Specialist will also provide professional development (PD) for teachers to ensure continuity in teaching methods that accelerate growth for students who perform below grade level standards through best-practice literacy strategies. We will monitor student growth after each unit assessment to determine the effectiveness of the strategies outlined above and provide immediate remediation and/or reteaching as necessary.

We've seen a similar trend in middle school math with the percentage of students scoring at the Developing, Proficient, and Distinguished Learner levels decreasing in most years as evidenced by Figure 5 below:

Figure 5: Percent of Students Scoring at Developing or Above in Math Milestones 2015-2017

Math	2015	2016	2017
6th Grade	51%	43%	42%
7th Grade	51%	43%	42%
8th Grade	51%	43%	42%

From 2014-2016, many teachers were teaching to the bottom quartile, which is part of the reason why students scoring at the Proficient levels in 2015 weren't showing growth (this phenomenon was across content areas and not unique to math). In the middle of 2016/17, we implemented Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces (ALEKS), a Web-based, artificially intelligent assessment and learning system that provides real time data on student progress. ALEKS is used as a supplement to the curriculum to provide targeted interventions for identified students and to assist students with accelerated learning. Teachers can use ALEKS to create assessments that meets each child where they are academically. Preliminary 2018 Milestones Analysis indicates that we will see a significant improvement in math performance, especially in 6th grade. We will continue to monitor student growth in math after each unit

assessment and provide additional supports as needed to continue the upward trajectory.

In addition to the obstacles described above, the Project-Based Learning (PBL) implementation became an impediment to student growth in both science and social studies as evidenced by the declining student performance in both subject areas between 2016 and 2017 and overall low levels of growth during the charter term. Our PBL implementation was gradual during the first three years as school administrators struggled to clearly outline and communicate expectations to teachers surrounding content delivery, the identification of learning outcomes, conduct training, and effective alignment of projects to Georgia standards.

While students created authentic learning projects that were creative and enhanced communication skills, there was little evidence to support greater depth of understanding and retention of content knowledge. Tapestry also had to make changes to the science teaching staff during the 2016-2017 school year to improve instructional quality. As a result, Tapestry shifted the focus away from PBL and placed a greater emphasis on increased teacher supports and PD related to understanding the standards and greater levels of instructional rigor.

In 2017, Tapestry's middle school students with disabilities (SWDs) outperformed DeKalb's SWDs in both Social Studies and Science (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Middle School 2017 SWD Science and Social Studies Milestone Performance Comparison

Subject	Tapestry	DeKalb County
Science	34.2	25.3
Social Studies	40.4	40.2

Tapestry values the PBL instructional strategy and the impact it has on a student's ability to think critically and solve complex problems. Within the next two years, our school administrators and teachers will work together to develop a strategy to effectively reinstitute PBL and maximize its educational benefits.

In 2017, we also implemented Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs) for all students in the middle school based on the 2016 Milestones performance and the easyCBM platform, both of which are used to develop a baseline for student performance. ILPs personalize the learning experience of each student by helping teachers develop strategies to either remediate or accelerate instruction. Progress toward individual goals is self-paced, with students working together in small flexible learning groups. Included within the ILPs may be recommendations for additional after school or during school tutoring, enhanced What I Need (WIN) time, or change in learning group placement.

Many of these efforts have resulted in improved levels of achievement, especially for our students with disabilities. In 2016, Tapestry's Milestones Mean Scale Scores for all students with disabilities in the middle school was higher than both DCSD and the State across all grade levels and content areas with the exception of 8th grade math. In 2017, Tapestry's Mean Scale Score for students with disabilities in the middle school was higher than DeKalb in all content areas (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Students with Disabilities 2017 Milestones Mean Scale Score Comparison

Subject	Tapestry 6th Grade	DeKalb 6th Grade	Tapestry 7th Grade	DeKalb 7th Grade	Tapestry 8th Grade	DeKalb 8th Grade
ELA	448	435	439	438	479	452
Math	463	461	466	463	472	462
Science	NA	NA	NA	NA	465	437
Social Studies	NA	NA	NA	NA	482	457

Lastly, in 2015 Tapestry's Middle School students with disabilities met state performance targets in ELA, Science, and Social Studies.

During the 2016-2017 school year, Tapestry began using Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) three times per year to benchmark student growth (fall, winter, spring) in ELA, math, and science. The results of the MAP assessments consistently reinforced the Milestones data, especially as it relates to

ELA. However, Tapestry is reevaluating this process and is working with an external consultant to develop end-of-unit assessments that can be used to benchmark student growth. While MAP data is relatively accurate in its prediction of Milestones performance, Tapestry administrators want a benchmark assessment tool that is better aligned to instruction and Georgia content standards. We plan to implement the practice of using end-of-unit assessments in addition to MAP during the 2019/20 school year. The graphs below illustrate the average rate of growth that middle school students made between Fall 2016 to Winter 2017 and Fall 2017 to Winter 2018 (see Figures 8-10).

Figure 8: 6th Grade MAP Fall to Winter 16-17 vs 17-18 Comparison

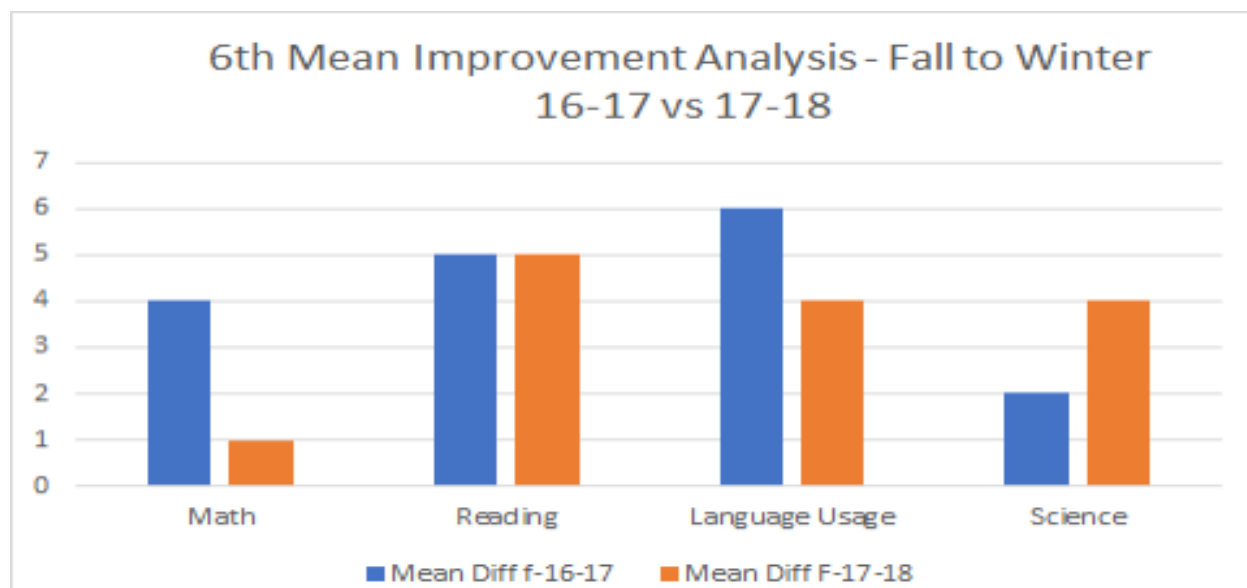
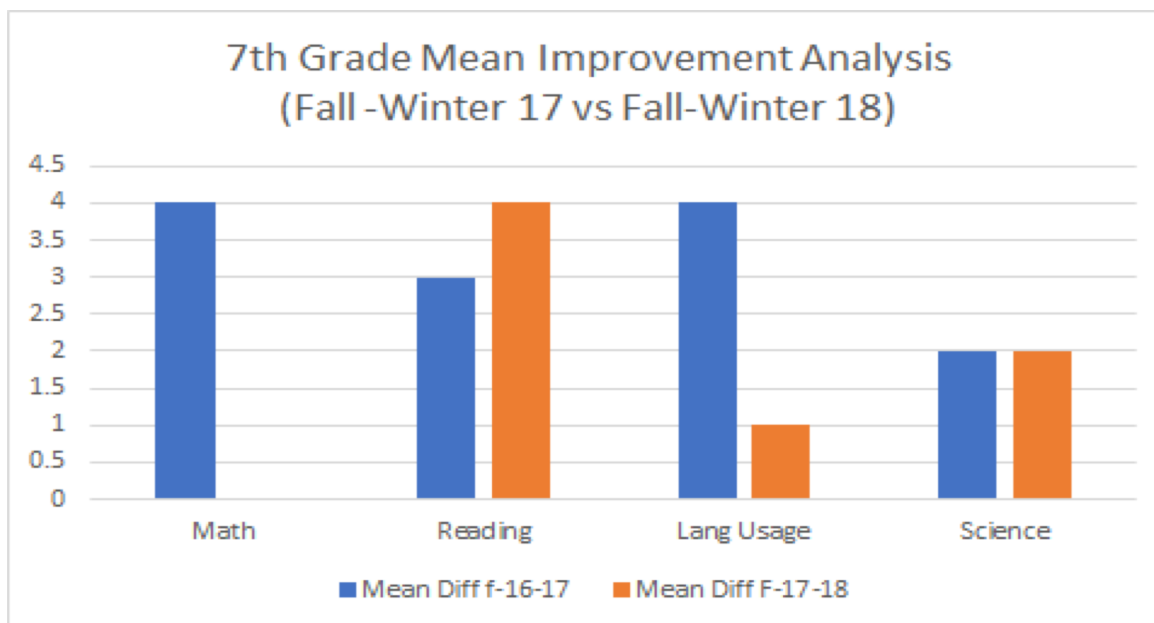
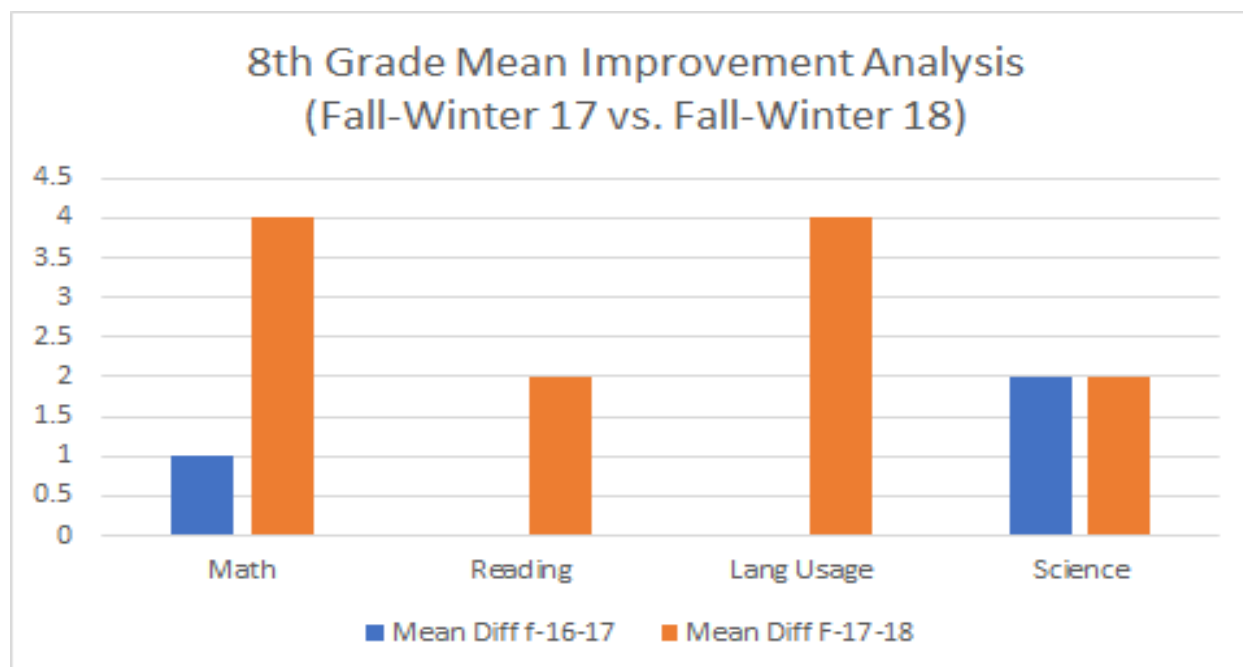


Figure 9: 7th Grade MAP Fall to Winter 16-17 vs 17-18 Comparison*Figure 10: 8th Grade MAP Fall to Winter 16-17 vs 17-18 Comparison*High School

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Tapestry's CCRPI High School Score as compared to DCSD and the State in addition to the CCRPI score component breakdowns are provided below in Figures 11 and 12.

Figure 11: Tapestry CCRPI High School Comparison

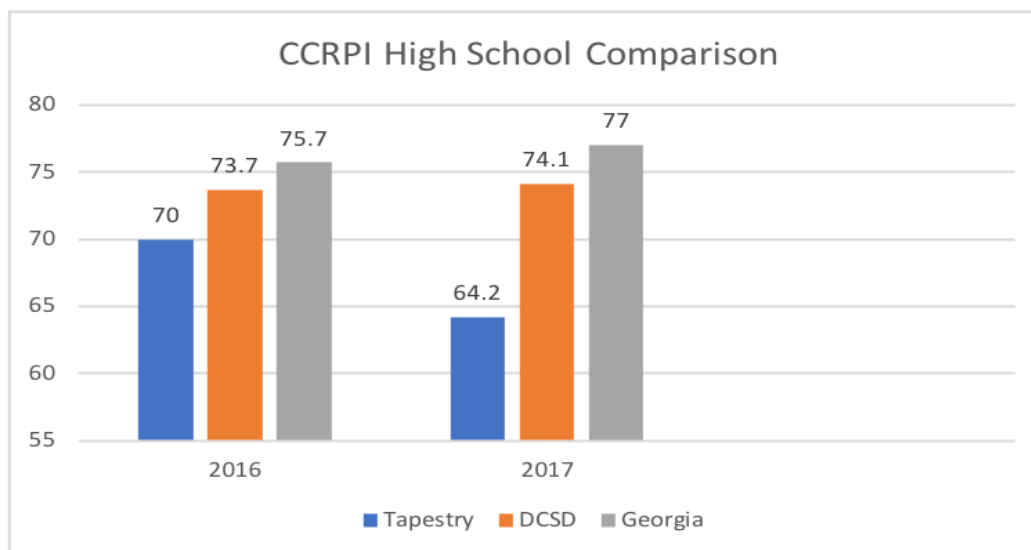
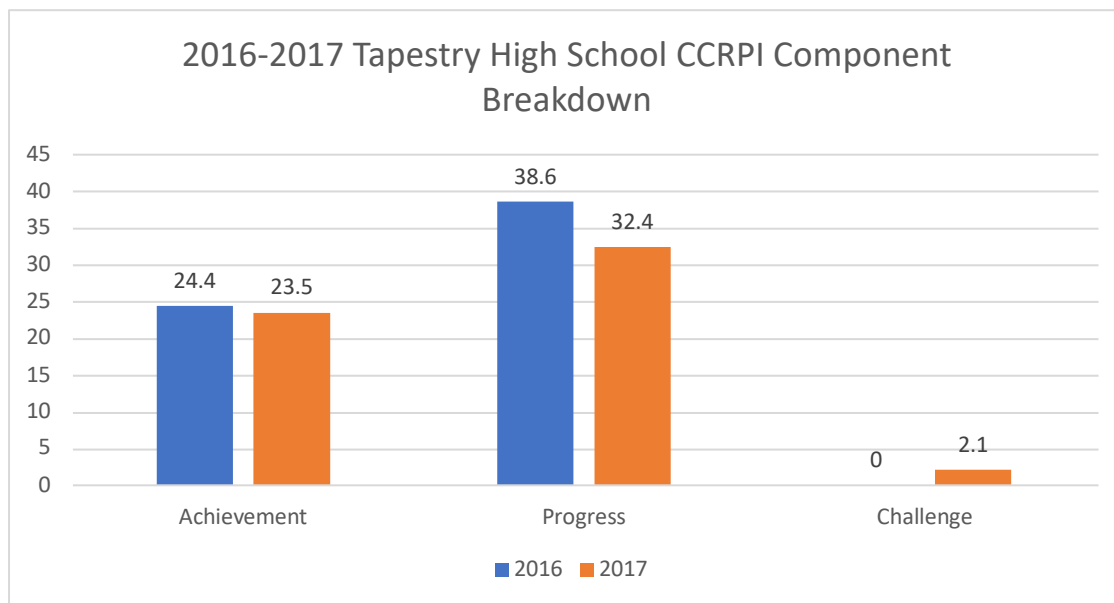


Figure 12: 2016-2017 Tapestry High School CCRPI Component Breakdown (Tapestry did not receive points for Achievement gap in 2016 and 2017 because there were too few students to count)



Tapestry's 2016 CCRPI score serves as the baseline, as this year was our first year of high school.

Tapestry's 2016 CCRPI score was only 3.7 points behind DCSD and 5.7 points below the State. Student growth was strong with our high school earning 38.6 out of 40 Progress Points, outperforming both the District and the State with 36.7 and 34.3 respectively. However, much like the middle school, students at the Proficient levels showed low growth. We also had a significant number of students scoring at the Beginning Learner level in 9th Grade Literature (30%), Biology (51%), and Coordinate Algebra (58%).

Although our CCRPI score declined between 2016 and 2017, we increased our points in 9th Grade Literature and Composition due to an increase in the percentage of students scoring at the Proficient or Distinguished levels. In 2016, 28% of our students scored at the Proficient or Distinguished levels in 9th Grade Literature and Composition and in 2017, 40% of our students scored at that level. Our high school did not receive points for Graduation Rate because we only had 9th and 10th grade students. However, the overall Content Mastery score increased slightly. Tapestry also lost points for lower-than-expected attendance rates due to student medical and mental health issues.

Many of the challenges we experienced in the middle school also directly impacted our performance in the high school. There was an increase in the number of students in 9th grade between 2016 and 2017 and many of those students lacked basic foundational skills. As previously mentioned, Tapestry experienced challenges with implementing a comprehensive literacy program throughout the school to accelerate the growth of students reading below grade level. The same strategies that were implemented at the middle school (change in curriculum and internal assessments, small learning groups, reading across all disciplines, professional development (PD) for teachers related to standards, etc.) were also implemented in the high school (pp. 10-11). The impact of these strategies is further evidenced by the improved Milestones performance in 9th Grade Literature from 2016 to 2018 (See Figure 13).

Additionally, the challenges with middle school math were further compounded in high school. Students were struggling with basic math skills and were not prepared for the rigors of Analytic Geometry and Coordinate Algebra. The implementation of the ALEKS math program in 2016/17 across all grade levels has already resulted in significant gains in the high school, especially in Analytic Geometry (See

Figure 13).

In addition to the challenges and improvement strategies identified in middle school, Tapestry changed the sequence of courses in Science to better align the 8th and 9th grade curricula and to give students more time to develop foundational math skills in 2017/18. Students now take Physical Science before Biology.

In many of the high school disciplines, Tapestry is steepening the growth patterns that we are beginning to see in the middle school. For the content areas that have multi-year comparison data, Tapestry students demonstrated improvement in most subjects as evidenced by the percentage of students scoring at the Developing Learner level and above on the Milestones Winter 2017 administration (See Figure 13):

Figure 13: High School Milestones EOC % Developing Learner and above Comparison (Tapestry utilizes Block Scheduling at the high school level, so 2018 data was compiled from Winter 2017 scores)

Subject	2016	2017	2018 (Winter 2017 scores)	2017-2018 % Change
Ninth Grade Literature & Composition	66%	70%	100%	+30%
Analytic Geometry	NA	57%	75%	+18%
Biology	51%	49%	37%	-12%
Physical Science	NA	50%	52%	+2%
Coordinate Algebra	42%	44%	NA	+2%

Additionally, Tapestry's high school students with disabilities outperformed the Districts SWDs in Coordinate Algebra, Biology, and 9th Grade Literature and Composition in 2017 (see Figure 14).

Figure 14: Tapestry's High School 2017 SWD Coordinate Algebra, Biology, Ninth Grade Lit/Comp Performance Comparison (% Developing Learner and Above)

Subject	Tapestry	DeKalb County
Coordinate Algebra	30%	22%
Biology	37%	24%
Ninth Grade Lit and Comp.	48%	43%

High School students with disabilities also met state targets in 9th Grade Literature in 2016 and 2017 and in both Coordinate Algebra and Biology in 2016.

Tapestry used the MAP assessment in high school to benchmark student growth. The graphs that follow illustrate the average rate of growth that students made from Fall 2016 to Winter 2017 and Fall 2017 to Winter 2018 in 9th, 10th, and 11th grades (see Figures 15-17). These data reinforce the continued need for targeted interventions in math and ELA, especially for students entering 9th grade.

Figure 15: 9th Grade MAP Fall to Winter 16-17 vs 17-18 Comparison

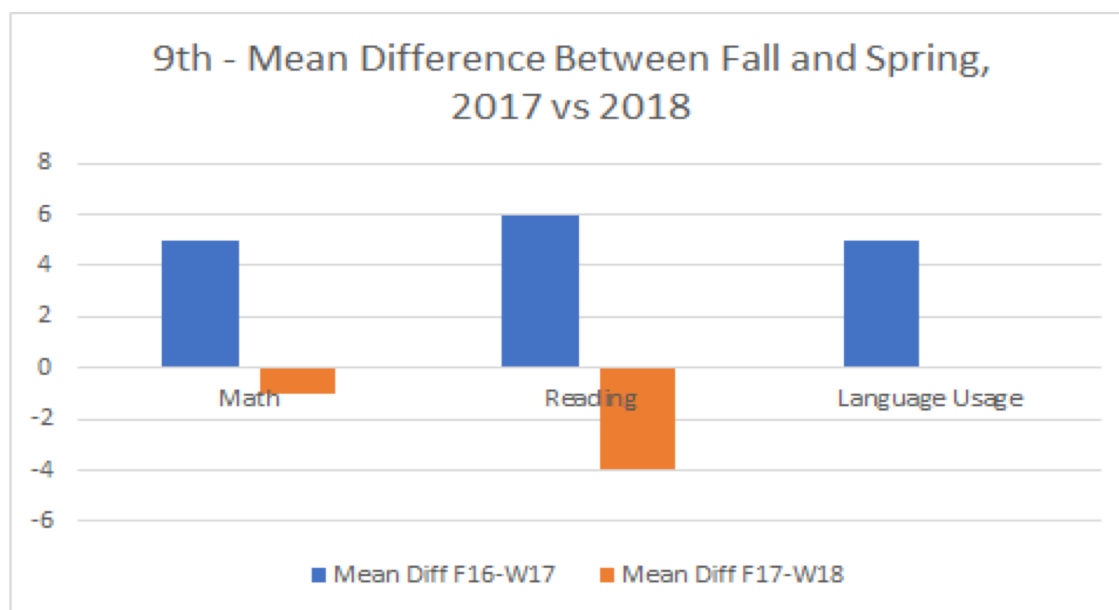
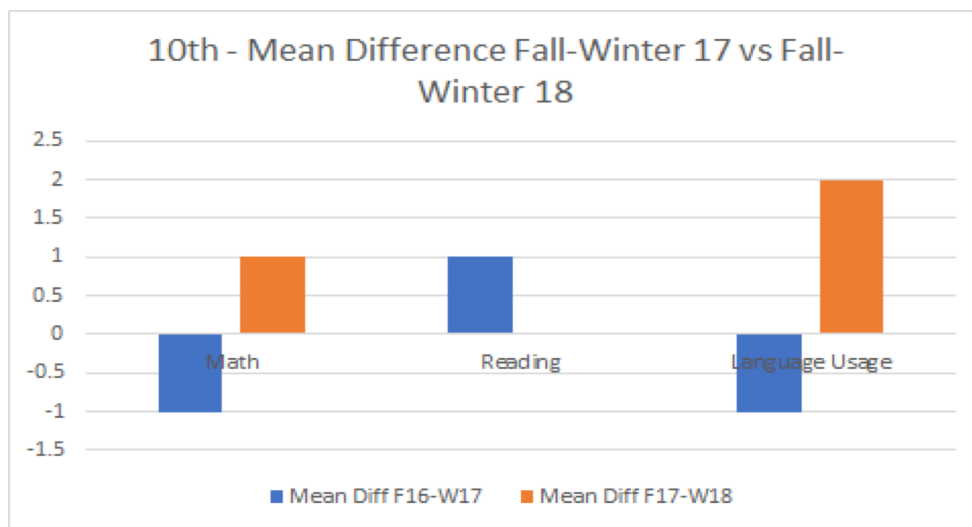
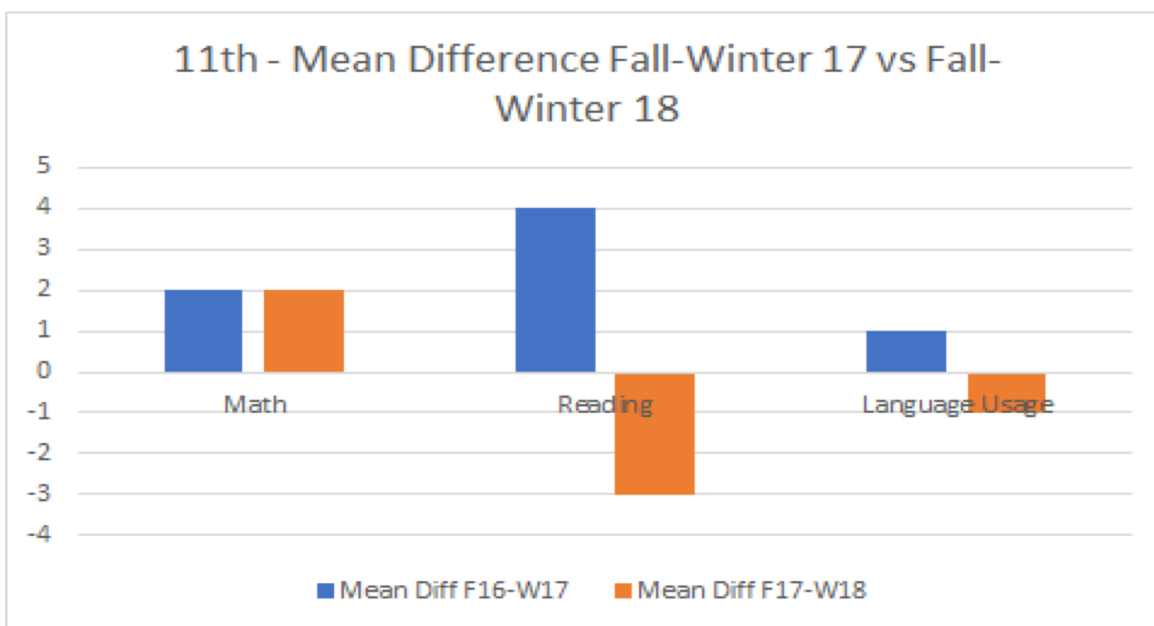


Figure 16: 10th Grade MAP Fall to Winter 16-17 vs 17-18 Comparison*Figure 17: 11th Grade MAP Fall to Winter 16-17 vs 17-18 Comparison*

Additionally, all of our students benefit from having special education co-teachers in every academic classroom, which reduces student-teacher ratios, provides the means for flexible grouping on demand, and

allows for real-time curriculum adjustments based on individual needs. Because of the small class size, each teacher has greater ownership of student growth and can work closely with other staff members to fashion a seamless support network.

Schoolwide Professional Development

Our staff members receive annual training on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which helps teachers develop instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that are individualized.

Tapestry teachers also benefit from regular coaching and support from school administrators, resulting in a 100% proficiency rate for all instructional staff on the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES).

During summer 2018, staff members received training on Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) related to differentiating instruction, assignments, and assessments based on individual student needs.

Lastly, during the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years, we implemented Social Emotional Engagement-Knowledge & Skills (SEE-KS) practices schoolwide. Training was led by the Marcus Autism Center and focused on increasing students' social and emotional engagement in the classroom by developing strategies and practices to prevent behaviors that interfere with learning. Through these efforts, we have noticed a significant increase in student engagement and a decrease in discipline referrals. Using the SEE-KS measurement, baseline data in fall 2017 demonstrated that the mean engagement level of our students was 1.5 on a scale of 1-4. At the end of the 2018 school year, student mean engagement was at 2.59. Progress is monitored three times a year using the SEE-KS engagement ladder. Through coaching sessions, teachers analyze the engagement level of their students and determine next steps. (See [Engagement Ladder in Appendix A](#). See [Coaching Sample in Appendix B](#).)

The decrease in discipline referrals at Tapestry has been the result of targeted staff professional development. For the past four years, the Tapestry staff have engaged in a series of professional development sessions which promote looking at behavior in a nontraditional manner. Rather than seeing behaviors as a disciplinary issue, the staff view behavior as communication. Behaviors that stand in the way of academic progress may not require a disciplinary reaction; rather the school needs to teach the

skills and strategies students need to engage meaningfully. This approach is culled from sources such as Dr. Greene's Collaborative and ProActive Solutions Model (CPS) and from professional development developed by Tapestry partners Emily Rubin, Director of Educational Outreach at the Marcus Autism Center, and Dr. Matt Segall, Program Director of the Emory Autism Center.

Tapestry's model was intentionally designed to serve a high percentage of students with disabilities (currently 55%) in a fully inclusive model. With such a diverse population of learners, meeting the state accountability measures has been a challenge. We did not Beat the Odds during any year of the charter term. The Beating the Odds designation does not account for schools that have significantly high levels of SWDs (outlier populations).

Additionally, 30% of the CCRPI is based on the Achievement Indicator, which includes Content Mastery. Content Mastery scores are directly correlated to the Georgia Milestones results. While we have demonstrated gains in our Milestones performance, the nature and severity of a student's disability can directly impact their performance on the test. Tapestry students are thriving, and the current accountability models do not accurately reflect the true accomplishments of our school. At Tapestry, we recognize our responsibility to offer a high-quality educational option for students and have implemented strategies and supports to accelerate student achievement. However, due to our unique circumstances, we welcome an opportunity for continued conversations with both DCSD and GaDOE around alternative academic accountability measures.

Organizational Results

Goal 1: The Charter School will be economically sustainable.

Tapestry met this goal in each year of the charter term. Specific details about our financial condition are provided in the response to Question #2 of this section. However, Tapestry remains fiscally viable and has accomplished the following:

- Submitted unqualified annual audits with no findings

- Maintained adequate cash reserves
- Demonstrated effective allocation of resources
- Met all Generally Accepted Government Accounting Standards
- Met all financial reporting deadlines set by the Georgia Department of Education

Goal 2: The Charter School shall ensure all Governing Board members receive effective training at least annually.

Tapestry successfully met this goal in each year of the charter term. Annually, the Governing Board develops a training plan that identifies specific training topics to increase our capacity and promote effective oversight. The training is conducted by the Georgia Charter Schools Association and is delivered either face-to-face or via webinars. [The Governance Training Plan is attached as Exhibit 30.](#)

Goal 3: The Charter School shall promote a positive school experience that engages students, parents, and teachers.

Creating a culture and climate where students, faculty, staff, and families feel safe, valued, supported, connected, empowered, and respected is critical to the continued success of our school. Social climate is as important as the academic subjects taught in each classroom. One measure of a positive school culture, as outlined in the charter contract, is student attendance rates. According to the Governor's Office of Student Achievement, Tapestry's attendance rates from 2014-2017 are as follows:

	Number of Students	5 or Fewer Days Absent (%)	6 to 15 Days Absent (%)	More Than 15 Days Absent (%)
2016-17	166	62.7%	26.5%	10.8%
2015-16	144	88.2%	8.3%	3.5%
2014-15	105	62.9%	27.6%	9.5%

Tapestry saw a decrease in the percentage of students absent 15 days or more in the 2017-2018 school year to 9%. Many students at Tapestry have serious medical conditions (i.e., sickle cell, type 1 diabetes) or clinical anxiety that cause them to miss a significant amount of school. We have offered a variety of supports over the years with minimal success. In 2017-18, we enacted a protocol for students diagnosed with clinical anxiety. Teachers, counselors, school administration, and the student's personal psychologist/psychiatrist collaboratively develop a plan to help him/her complete assignments, remain engaged, and stay on track through the use of virtual days. If the student completes his/her assignment by 4:00 pm on the virtual day (5-day maximum), they will not be considered absent. We are currently in discussions with DCSD to determine the feasibility of expanding this process to students with other serious medical conditions.

Tapestry families and teachers demonstrate high levels of satisfaction with the school as evidenced by parent surveys, parent engagement, and the school climate scores. Each year, Tapestry aims for at least a four-star rating on the School Climate Rating. In 2014-2015, our first year of operation, we received a three-star rating. From 2015-2017, we have met our goal and received a four-star rating every year.

As part of the AdvancEd accreditation process in 2017, we conducted a survey of parents, which resulted in 48% of our total parents responding to the survey. The domains for the survey include Purpose and Direction; Governance and Leadership; Teaching and Assessing Learning; Resources and Support Systems; and Using Results for Continuous Improvement. Parents gave their highest level of satisfaction to Tapestry's purpose, leadership, student advocacy, and technology. 100% of the parents surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that Tapestry's school purpose is clearly focused on student success. 94% of parents surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that our school has high expectations for students in all classes. When asked if their child has at least one adult advocate at the school, 62% of the parents strongly agreed and 36% of the parents agreed. 97% of our parents feel that their child has up-to-date computers and technology with which to learn. The lowest scores from the 2017 parent survey concerned

the school's communication to parents about grades. Parents felt that they weren't sure how the grades were calculated and what the scores meant. Since 2017, the staff has created a grading policy that is communicated to parents in written form and in meetings.

We conducted the AdvancEd parent survey again in the Spring of 2018. Response rates were low for the 2018 parent survey at only 24%. This low participation rate was likely due to the lack of opportunities for the parents to take the survey and the low degree of marketing regarding the importance of the survey. However, the overall score was a 4.19 out of 5, which is higher than the AdvancEd network average of 4.02. In the 2018 survey, 91% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that our school's purpose statement is clearly focused on student success, and 92% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that our school provides a safe learning environment.

Tapestry will continue to administer the AdvancEd Stakeholder survey throughout the next charter term to better understand families' perceptions of the school. We plan to improve our participation rates by working more closely with the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) to market the surveys to families and by utilizing family events to provide opportunities for parents to complete the survey.

Staff and students also participated in the 2017 AdvancEd survey. Students identified the teachers, programs, services, and resources here at Tapestry as supportive of their success. 90% of the staff agreed or strongly agreed that the school's purpose is based on student success. The staff gave high ratings for the school leadership's support of innovative and collaborative cultures. They identified school leadership as holding itself accountable for student learning and holding all staff members accountable for those same goals. 92% of the staff agreed or strongly agreed that we have formal structures in place to ensure that each student has at least one advocate. The staff agreed with the parents that the school needs to provide better communication regarding grading and systems of supports for students.

The students identified the teachers, programs, services, and resources here at Tapestry as available to them and supportive of their success. They felt that teachers have high expectations of them both academically and behaviorally and that the teachers are here to help them develop the skills they

need to succeed. The students gave the teachers high ratings on their use of a variety of teaching methods and the use of technology throughout the school. The biggest area of concern for students was in the issue of respect. They felt as if the students don't respect each other enough. Since the survey was taken in 2017, Tapestry has created a School Culture and Climate Committee which is tasked with monitoring staff and student safety, respect, and overall culture of the school.

In 2018, we did not survey the staff or students. We have implemented a system to ensure that we provide opportunities for the staff, students, and parents to take the survey in January of every year. We will market the surveys through the PTO, school events, and in staff meetings and advisory classes. Our goal is to have an 85% participation rate with all stakeholders and to compare these results with those obtained in 2017.

2. Describe the school's current financial situation. In your description:

- **Include an explanation of financial results**
- **Detail any financial successes or struggles the school experienced during the current charter term. Include any instances of fraudulent behavior or accusations of fraudulent behavior by school staff, governing board members, or anyone else associated with the school. Merely meeting the minimum expectations of an audit is not an acceptable success.**
- **Explain how the school will address any struggles discussed above as well as any outstanding debts. Explain how the school will allocate any surplus funds.**

Tapestry's overall financial position has improved consistently over the course of this charter term, despite funding challenges during the first few years of operation. During the 2014-2015 school year, we were underfunded for our Special Education (SPED) and gifted populations. There was also a lack of clarity around paraprofessional funding and how/if those positions would be supplemented by the district. As a result of the funding shortfall, Tapestry secured a \$100,000 Line of Credit to meet

operational expenses in addition to embarking on an aggressive fundraising campaign.

In 2015, we purchased our current facility for \$3,207,000 with support from an anonymous donor. The donor has agreed to forgive the outstanding mortgage debt if we are renewed in 2019 ([agreement is attached as Exhibit 22](#)). Unexpected and costly facility repairs, late grant reimbursements, underfunding, and spending that outpaced revenue caused Tapestry to operate with a negative monthly cash flow for most of 2014-2015. However, Tapestry ended the 2015-2016 school year with a surplus of \$478,449 including restricted funds (\$84,000 was unrestricted) due to prudent spending and increased supplemental income from grants, donations, and rent payments. Tapestry also received a sizeable reimbursement from DCSD for the funding shortfall, and Quality Basic Education (QBE) funding increased significantly from Year 1 to Year 2. Despite the financial challenges, Tapestry built reserves and plans to have \$300,000 set aside by FY 2020. We currently have approximately \$230,000 cash reserves and \$0 debt, with a long-term goal of building reserves to three months of our annual budget.

Tapestry has remained conservative with its spending and continues to make sensible financial decisions to ensure the long-term viability of the school. Scott Logan, MBA, is our current Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and brings over 20 years of accounting and financial management experience. Mr. Logan is supported by a Business Manager who oversees the daily finance and business functions for the school including accounting and bank reconciliations and an office manager who prints checks, manages incoming purchase orders, and assists with personnel issues. The team also prepares monthly financial reports for the Board, manages the annual audit, develops and monitors the annual budget, and oversees the accounts payable/receivable, procurement, and HR processes. [Mr. Logan's resume is attached as Exhibit 23.](#)

The Board's Finance Committee monitors the school's financial viability and is charged with adopting sound fiscal policies, designing short- and long-term financial strategies, and ensuring compliance with all applicable rules and laws. Prior to each Board meeting, they review the current monthly financial reports, which includes the balance sheet, income statement, budget with year-to-date

activities, bank statement, budgeted vs. actual spending, and variances over \$250 that require board approval. Revenue projections are carefully analyzed, and expenses are tracked to ensure budget overruns are minimized.

In addition, they oversee the selection of an independent auditor and the completion of the annual audit. The audit verifies the accuracy of the school's financial statements, attendance and enrollment figures, general accounting practices, legal compliance, and internal controls. The audit is conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and complies with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards. Tapestry has received an unqualified audit each year with no findings. The Board has received extensive fiscal training and is equipped to responsibly manage the school's finances.

The Board, in collaboration with school leadership and the CFO, oversees the annual budget development process. The budget is typically presented to the Board's Finance Committee in March by the CFO for review and revisions. When drafting the budget, the Finance Committee collaborates with the Academic Excellence Committee to ensure alignment with academic priorities and enrollment projections for the subsequent school year. In accordance with applicable law and rules, we hold two public budget hearings each May.

The Board also monitors monthly spending to ensure compliance with the budget throughout the year. Any surplus funds remaining at the close of the fiscal year are used to enhance the academic program, maintain the facility, increase staff salaries, build reserves, or fund any major initiative that furthers Tapestry's mission. Staff are paid utilizing an approved pay scale that was developed through research of the pay offered in other districts. The board regularly reviews the pay scale and when necessary, appoints a sub-committee to reassess its structure and salaries and make recommendations to the Board.

Tapestry plans to continue supplementing revenue by aggressively pursuing a variety of public and private grants and enhancing our fundraising campaign for charitable donations from individuals and

businesses. We have exceeded both our FY18 fundraising goal of \$481,965 and our FY17 contributions by raising \$515,286 so far this year. Included in our fundraising total is a \$225,000 Charter School Program Dissemination Grant from the Georgia Department of Education to share best practices and highlight what makes Tapestry unique. Additionally, Tapestry benefits from numerous community partners who provide in-kind services and items for various initiatives.

We have become financially stable during this charter term. The Board has grown to understand and balance the need to build reserves with the need for additional resources. We have built a strong financial team that works in concert with the school leader to balance these competing needs. The financial plan for the upcoming charter term is based on conservative estimations of growth, actual data from enrollment over the past three years, and financial statements since the school's inception. [The five-year projected budget is attached as Exhibit 22.](#)

3. Provide a brief overview of the school's current governance structure. In your description, you must include:

- **Specific examples of decisions the governing board has made on behalf of the school, within the following areas of authority; financial, resource allocation, personnel, curriculum and instruction, school improvement, and school operations.**
- **Specific examples of decisions the school leader has made on behalf of the school;**
- **How the governing board holds the school leader, any charter partners (ESP/CMO/EMO), and any independent contractors accountable; and**
- **The governing board's training program for the current and proposed charter term. Attach as Exhibit 6 a copy of the board's Governance Training Plan.**
- **Full responses to the Governing Board Observations conducted by the DCSD Charter Office as Exhibit 29.**

Strong leadership at all levels of an organization, including the governing body, is critical for a charter school to bolster student achievement and affect change within the surrounding community.

Tapestry's current governance structure is designed to ensure that the Board can make decisions that align with the mission and vision of the school; hold administration accountable for academic and operational results; fulfill the charter objectives; maintain financial sustainability; and make certain the school is compliant with applicable federal and state laws. [Specific details related to the Governance structure is included in the Bylaws as Exhibit 2.](#)

The transition from a founding to a governing board posed some initial challenges. We received directed training and were able to transition successfully. In the beginning there were some challenges related to the recruitment of board members with identified skills, particularly when several original board members rolled off the board. We engaged in targeted recruitment utilizing our vast network of supporters to ensure that the board has the requisite skills to effectively govern this unique school.

Board Composition

Tapestry's Board is comprised of no more than 15 voting members with the Principal serving as a non-voting, ex-officio member. The executive leadership team includes four (4) Officer positions: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer/CFO. The composition of the Board represents diverse areas of expertise including education, corporate consulting, governance, development and fundraising, accounting, real estate, law, finance, and human resources. The racial composition of the current Board is reflective of the school community with five (5) African-Americans, one (1) Asian-American, and nine (9) White-Americans.

Since the school's inception, a significant number of board members have had children attend the school (currently 8), who are drawn to the inclusive, supportive, and individualized learning environment Tapestry provides for both students who are neurotypical and those who are on the autism spectrum. Although having a parent majority Board is not always viewed favorably, strong parent engagement,

especially in leadership positions, is critical for the effective implementation of such a unique model. Managing a parent majority Board has not always been easy, but requires the recruitment of highly skilled professionals, ongoing training of best practices in effective governance, clear communication, and carefully crafted policies to eliminate conflicts. When done right, a parent majority governing board that includes a balance of stakeholder representation can lead to a productive, community-oriented school.

The Board engages in active recruitment to ensure needed skill sets are represented on the board. As of the submission of this petition, only four of the original founding members remain on the 14-person board. The Board has successfully transitioned members and will continue to do so throughout the remaining charter term. In addition, many of the Board members who have cycled off the Board remain involved in committees to ensure continuity and assist in building competency of the new board members. We strive to have a 50/50 mix of parent and non-parents on the Board and the focus on needed skill sets in recruitment protects against the board becoming isolated or self-focused. In addition, all Board members are aware of potential conflicts of interest and recuse themselves if conflicted.

Tapestry has successfully recruited diverse Board members with a variety of skills. Sometimes the most qualified candidate is a parent of a child who attends the school; on the other hand, sometimes the most qualified candidate is not a parent of a child who attends the school. The Board is committed to maintaining the balance of both parents and non-parents while maintaining the requisite skills on the board. In addition to the Board, the school relies on its advisory council for additional resources as needed. The Board does not require a minimum donation level, and thus financial means does not pose a barrier to service on the Board.

Term Limits

At the end of the first year, Tapestry Board members were assigned staggered term limits to prevent the loss of institutional knowledge by having the majority of experienced Directors leaving at the same time. Currently, each member serves a two (2) year term and can be re-elected at the end of the

term. There is no limit to the number of terms a Board member can serve.

Committee Structure

Tapestry has a strong, functioning committee structure in place to advance the work of the Board. There are currently six (6) standing committees charged with monitoring the academic, operational, and fiscal health of the school:

Financial: The Finance Committee, chaired by the Board's Treasurer/CFO, works closely with the school Business Manager and Principal to ensure the fiscal health of the organization.

Resource Allocation: The Development and Fundraising Committee builds external relationships, sets fundraising expectations and goals, and tracks progress toward those goals to meet Tapestry's ongoing financial needs by supplementing QBE funding.

Partnerships: The Partnerships and Outreach Committee reviews, approves, oversees, and recommends actions related to Tapestry's outreach to partners and community members. Tapestry has over 25 sustained partnerships. (See [Tapestry Partners in Appendix C.](#))

Curriculum and Instruction: The role of the Academic Excellence Committee is to oversee the school's progress toward meeting its academic goals and to develop and maintain partnerships with entities that will bolster the effectiveness of instructional strategies and various aspects of the curriculum.

Governance: The Governance Committee recruits, reviews qualifications, and nominates prospective candidates for the Board.

Facility: The Facilities Committee oversees the development and maintenance of campus grounds, buildings, and facilities.

Board Decisions

During the initial years of the school's operation, the Board focused on building internal capacity and providing stability to the school. We have regularly reviewed and revised the bylaws and policies as appropriate, engaged in a series of development opportunities, and worked to move toward a more

sustainable and strategic governance structure. The frequency by which the Board meets (at least 10 times annually) ensures that we are actively monitoring progress toward the charter goals. In addition, we have adopted a Conflict of Interest Policy/Form that each member is required to sign annually, as well as a Code of Ethics. The impact of our work can be seen by some of the decisions made on behalf of the school over the last four (4) years. A few examples are provided below, and [additional details are provided in the Roles and Responsibilities Chart included as Exhibit 6:](#)

- Vendor contract approval (ongoing)
- Hired the current Principal in 2015
- Identify and cultivate relationships with critical partners (ongoing)
- Developed five-year strategic plan in 2014, with implementation monitored annually
- Approve and adopt financial policies and annual budget (ongoing)
- Secured permanent facility in 2015
- Annually approve the school calendar
- Set student enrollment targets each year
- Fundraising (ongoing)
- Annually approve Teacher/Staff salaries
- Successfully awarded AdvancEd accreditation in 2017
- Modify and approve the School Improvement Plans as necessary
- Regularly monitor and review the school's academic performance and adopt policies to support student achievement goals

Principal Decisions

The partnership that exists between the Governing Board and Principal has created an environment where roles and expectations are clearly defined. While the Board outlines the strategic direction, monitors academic progress, and develops policies, the Principal is empowered to oversee the day-to-day operations and to ensure that all decisions are aligned with the mission and vision of the

school. To establish effective communication, the Principal provides a written and oral report at each Board meeting. Some of the decisions made by the Principal during the course of this charter term include the following:

- Changed curriculum to meet new assessment standards and to increase instructional rigor in 2016
- Introduced and implemented Social Emotional Engagement-Knowledge & Skills (SEE-KS) Professional Development in 2017
- Strengthened Gifted program for middle school in 2015-2016
- Works with Marcus Autism Center on teacher coaching (ongoing)
- Oversaw the Implementation Grant Steering Committee in 2017-2018
- Implements school policies, procedures, and administrative functions as directed by the Board (ongoing)
- Annually hires, terminates, disciplines, and promotes teachers and other school personnel with board authorization

Accountability

Tapestry's Board holds the Principal accountable by conducting an annual performance review using the Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES). This evaluation provides clear, written objectives and goals and is the basis for determining if the Principal is serving the needs of the school. The assessment is used to drive continuous improvement in Board objectives, Principal performance, and overall School excellence. In addition, the executive committee meets at least annually with the Principal to review the prior year and evaluate accomplishments, opportunities for improvement and needed resources. Vendor contracts are also evaluated annually to determine if the relationship is financially sustainable, if the provider met the terms of the agreement, and if the company or organization is still meeting the academic/operational needs of the school.

Training

Governance training is essential to enhance the effectiveness of any nonprofit board. Tapestry's Board receives annual training from the Georgia Charter Schools Association (GCSA) via webinar or face-to-face. Some of the training topics covered during this charter term included the following: governance best practices, financial monitoring, strategic planning, service provider evaluation, open records, recruitment, and committee structure. All new Board members are advised of the training requirements prior to Board confirmation to ensure Tapestry's continued compliance with the training mandates. The Board will continue to contract with GCSA during the next charter term and will annually customize the training content. [The 2017-2018 training plan is attached as Exhibit 30.](#)

Observations

The DeKalb County School District has observed the Tapestry Governing Board twice: on November 14, 2016 and April 16, 2018. Both observations included mandatory requirements, optional inclusions, best practices, observable practices, and feedback. After both observations, the Board received positive feedback and suggestions for better compliance with the Open Records Act or improved best practices in meetings. Following the first observation, the Board was instructed to post a summary of actions on the website within 48 hours of Board approval and to include a sign-in form at meetings. The Board also received commendations on the level of engagement and depth of discussion related to agenda items. Following the second observation, the Board was instructed to add GaDOE required items to the website. The Board was commended on the punctuality, flow, and tone in the meeting as well as the focus on the educational needs and wellbeing of the students. [The DeKalb County Governing Board Observation response is attached as Exhibit 29.](#)

- 4. Describe how the school provides state- and federally-mandated services to students with disabilities. Reciting the requirements of law and rule is insufficient. Your description must include the school's practices and procedures to:**
- **Evaluate and identify students with disabilities;**

- **Develop, review, and revise Individualized Education Programs (IEPs);**
- **Integrate special education into the general education program;**
- **Ensure that the school facility meets the requirements of other related laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504;**
- **Address student discipline;**
- **Handle programming disputes involving parents;**
- **Ensure confidentiality of special education records;**
- **Purchase services from special education vendors or to contract with your local district to provide a continuum of special education services and how this arrangement will work;**
- **Secure technical assistance and training; and**
- ***Ensure the adequate number and qualifications of SPED staff.***

Tapestry was established as a school to meet the unique needs of students with autism in an inclusive environment. Every aspect of the school's programming is designed to serve students with disabilities with fidelity. Tapestry offers a highly differentiated educational environment that embraces the unique developmental and learning needs of each student. Consistent with the school's mission, we employ a variety of classroom methods and techniques to reach and teach students receiving special education services, including differentiated curriculum for those needing additional supports and acceleration for students identified as gifted.

Tapestry is committed to providing a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and will continue to comply with all applicable regulatory special education requirements including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Evaluation and Identification

Currently, Tapestry serves a significant portion of students with disabilities (SWDs) at approximately 55% of the total student body (40% with autism). Since identification typically occurs during the elementary years, roughly 50% of the SWD population enters the school with an existing Individualized Education Program (IEP). The remaining 5% of SWDs are identified through either the Response to Intervention Process (RTI) or parent referral.

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with both learning and behavioral needs. All students receive Tier 1 instruction in a rigorous academic setting based on the Georgia Performance Standards, the use of Universal Design for Learning, Social Emotional Engagement-Knowledge and Skills (SEE-KS) strategies, differentiation and accommodation of curriculum, universal screening, and formative and benchmark assessments. Students who require Tier 2 supports receive interventions and close monitoring. Students who do not make expected progress after successive interventions will be referred for Tier 3 Interventions through referral to the Student Support Team (SST).

The Student Support Team (SST) consists of the referring teacher, special education teacher, 504 coordinator/counselor, administrator, additional subject or grade-specific teacher(s), and parent(s). The ESOL teacher will be present at all SSTs for all ESOL students. Additional members such as the Autism Specialist and Special Education Coordinator may be invited to the meeting depending on the needs of the student. The SST reviews assessments and other data and determines interventions to support academic or behavioral success. Data to be reviewed can include (but is not limited to): standardized testing, formative assessments, benchmark assessment, anecdotal records, school records including referrals and attendance, and parent input. The team then identifies the needs of the student, creates an intervention plan, develops a monitoring process, and schedules a follow-up meeting. The success of interventions will be reviewed at each successive SST meeting, which is held approximately every 6-8 weeks. Students who demonstrate growth with interventions will be released from the SST process and will continue to be monitored using the school's monthly monitoring system. If a student is not demonstrating growth using these Tier 3

strategies, the SST may refer the student for Tier 4 support, which includes a formal assessment for special education services.

A student will be referred for special education services only after all of the appropriate interventions (small group instruction, study skills assistance, positive behavioral supports, targeted academic interventions, etc.) of the general education program have been exhausted. Once the referral is made, a conference is conducted with the parents to discuss the need for a special education evaluation, how data will be obtained and utilized, their rights/procedural safeguards, and to gain written consent to advance the process.

Individualized Education Program

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed for each student that qualifies for special education services. The IEP is developed and monitored by a team that consists of the general education teacher, special education (SPED) teacher, school administrator, parent(s), student, autism specialist, psychologist, and a representative from D. Every IEP contains the following information:

- A Meeting notice signed by parent identifying the date, time, and location of meeting
- Special Education Information including the type of IEP, meeting date, implementation date, eligibility date, three-year evaluation date, and indication of additional exceptionalities
- Assessments Data including, but not limited to:
 - Recent (within two years) Psychological/educational/speech-language assessments
 - State Assessments
 - School Benchmark or Classroom Assessments
 - Description of Progress or Lack of Progress in Assessments
- Identification of Student Strengths
- Identification of Student Needs
- Parental Concerns

- Impact Statement that addresses the specific disability characteristics and addresses the impact on classroom performance
- Special Factors including Behavior Intervention Plans and Adaptive Technology requirements
- Transition Plan and Transition Goals
- Goals and Objectives that relate to needs and are measurable
- Student Supports including instructional and testing accommodations, supplemental aids and services, and supports for school personnel
- Assessment Determination and Accommodations
- Services Considered
- Related Services
- Qualifications of Extended School Year
- Documentation of Parent Participation
- Identification and Signature of Team Members

The IEP team formally reviews a student's IEP at least once a year to determine if the existing IEP is still meeting his/her needs. However, student progress toward the stated goals is monitored regularly by the special education (SPED) and general education teachers through formal and informal assessments, work samples, and observations/anecdotal records. Based on this monitoring of goals and with mutual agreement of the Tapestry staff and parent, the IEP can be changed, modified, or amended. These changes can be made either by setting up a new IEP meeting or through a mutual written agreement to make changes without a meeting. The parent has the right to request an IEP meeting at any time. Parents will receive copies of the changes and explanations for changes within a reasonable time.

There are currently 15 SPED teachers at Tapestry, each of whom is the primary case manager for eight-ten students. The collaboration between the general education teacher, SPED teacher, and in many cases paraprofessionals, creates small student-to-teacher ratios allowing for informed instructional decisions, accelerated learning, and more efficient communication with parents. Families receive progress

reports every 4.5 weeks with specific details about classroom performance and how their child is progressing toward the IEP goals.

Integration into General Education Classroom

Tapestry's model was intentionally designed to provide a supportive, inclusive learning environment for students with exceptionalities. To that end, many elements of the educational program support the needs of special education students including the following:

- 90-Minute Block schedules for high school classes allow students extra time to master course content, complete class work, and finish quizzes and tests
- Small class sizes allow for more individualized instruction and support
- Regular communication with parents about student progress
- Co-teaching model that includes a special education teacher in each core content classroom
- A daily schedule that minimizes student transitions
- Extensive small-group mentoring designed to provide students with feedback on their performance on an ongoing basis
- Flexible grouping in academic and enrichment classes that aligns both to academic and developmental/psycho-social/emotional needs
- A schoolwide pedagogical model that builds in systematic review and reassessment
- Ongoing and regular professional development opportunities focused on effective strategies for supporting learning for special education students in the general education classroom, including Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- A positive school culture that promotes tolerance and respect for differences
- Targeted academic interventions for specific students based on need
- Technology supports that allow for differentiation, such as developmentally appropriate Lexile levels and text-to-speech supports
- Student-driven content used to reach standards mastery, providing flexibility and a strengths-

based approach

- Reduction of sensory processing distractions to support inclusion

For all students with disabilities, additional support is given as appropriate in the form of classroom and testing accommodations, differentiated and accommodated work using the principals of Universal Design for Learning, study skills instruction, re-teaching, and social/emotional consultation. Tapestry practices full inclusion and provides differentiations and accommodations in the general education environment through the co-teaching delivery model. Special education (SPED) staff and classroom teachers work together to collaboratively plan lessons that meet individual student needs and ensure that IEP goals are met, while serving students in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for continued academic/social/emotional growth.

Special education teachers participate in all grade level planning, meetings, and training, which enable them to work as a part of the grade level team rather than as a separate department. In addition to providing a robust training program that builds each teacher's subject matter competency, we make every effort to attract SPED teachers with previous co-teaching experience who can demonstrate content mastery. For example, special education teachers receive annual training related to co-teaching, differentiation, and accommodations. During the 2018-2019 school year, SPED teachers will receive training in Specially Designed Instruction to enhance co-teaching effectiveness in the classroom. This approach also helps general education teachers take greater ownership for the growth of all students.

Tapestry's mission to serve students with autism in an inclusive environment requires that all teachers, whether certified by content or special education, employ methods and strategies that support students on the autism spectrum. With coaching from the Autism Specialist and Academic Support/Lead Special Education Teacher, all teachers provide autism-specific supports in the following ways:

- Environmental Elements including sensory supports, short transitions, organized physical environment, visual supports for communication, behavior, and academics
- Behavioral Elements including use of visuals, de-escalation strategies, and understanding of the

neuroscience of autism and the functions of behavior

- Communication Elements such as visual supports, clear expectations for participation, and an emphasis on expressive language skills
- Instructional elements, including planning that incorporates IEP goals in the co-teaching model, small group instruction, differentiation for all students, accommodations in work and assessment, and maximizing student engagement through student independence, initiation, and emotional interest

Facility

Tapestry will continue to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 requirements related to the school facility and equal access to all aspects of the educational program. The entire building is on one level and areas with stairs are accessible by ramps or a chair lift to accommodate individuals who use a wheelchair. Additionally, clearly labeled handicap accessible spaces are available in the parking lot.

Discipline

The mission at Tapestry Public Charter is to provide a positive school culture that empowers all students to take possession of their innate talents and become creative builders of their own futures. Each and every Tapestry student is treated with respect and thrives in an academically enriching and socially engaging environment. Tapestry complies with all federal laws regarding students with disabilities.

The establishment of the school culture exists within a framework of understanding that Tapestry is a fully inclusive school where neurodiversity is accepted and celebrated. We believe that the function of behavior is communication, and while the behavior may be affecting a student's educational progress, it is important to understand the purpose of that behavior and assist the student in establishing more successful coping strategies.

In consideration of both an individual student's neurological and developmental functioning, specific behaviors that seem disrespectful may, in fact, be a sign of dysregulation. If it is decided that a

behavior is a sign of dysregulation, the staff will work with the child to learn alternate means of dealing with dysregulation.

Tapestry follows the DeKalb Code of Student Conduct. The revised edition focuses on interventions for adverse behaviors prior to consequences and we embrace that philosophy. The Code of Student Conduct also outlines levels of behaviors and interventions and consequences that match the level of the disruption to learning.

Level 1 and 2 behaviors are those that impact the student and the learning of others. These issues will be dealt with directly by the classroom teacher. Disciplinary actions may include redirection of behavior, student-teacher conference, problem solving, and the teaching of prosocial behaviors.

Level 3 and 4 behaviors are those that affect an orderly environment and take excessive teacher time. Students who are exhibiting these behaviors, which include lying, disrespect to an adult, or fighting, will be referred to the Assistant Principal or Principal for intervention and consequences. Disciplinary actions may include parent conference, loss of privileges, in-school or out-of-school suspension, behavior contract, and counseling support.

Level 5 -7 behaviors are those that involve the immediate safety of others. In the event that a student harms or attempts to harm another student, he/she will be immediately removed from the environment and taken to the Assistant Principal or Principal who will discover the underlying cause of the behavior and then determine the intervention and consequence.

All students receive training on the DCSD Code of Student Conduct and are required to pass a test on the components of the code during the first week of school. Parents are required to review the document with their child and sign a document stating that they have read through and understand the Code of Student Conduct.

Tapestry complies with all federal laws regarding discipline for students with disabilities. As a school that embraces the connection between academic success and social-emotional learning, each student's social, emotional, and behavioral needs are considered before harsh disciplinary consequences

are administered.

Programming Disputes

Tapestry views families as partners in their child's education and welcomes parent participation in the special education evaluation process. Teachers communicate both formally and informally with parents on a regular and consistent basis regarding their child's unique learning needs and, where relevant, the student's IEP goals. Due to this collaborative approach, Tapestry has not been involved in any programming disputes with parents. If a dispute were to arise about placement and/or services, an IEP meeting would be scheduled immediately to discuss the concerns, review assessment and classroom performance data, and attempt to resolve the issue. If the issue could not be resolved at the school level, a DeKalb County representative would be brought in to mediate. Parents are also notified of their rights to file a formal complaint or request a Due Process Hearing through the Procedural Safeguards Notice given at every IEP meeting.

Confidentiality

Maintaining student confidentiality is extremely important to Tapestry's staff. Each special education (SPED) teacher is a designated case manager for 8-10 students and is responsible for keeping hard copy records in a locked, fireproof cabinet in the SPED Coordinator's office. Access to the cabinet is limited to SPED personnel and school administration. Electronic records are maintained in password-protected files that can only be accessed by the special education staff, as well as related service providers such as the Speech-Language Pathologist and Occupational Therapist. Staff members are also instructed not to discuss student-specific details in any public area around the school including restrooms, hallways, and the cafeteria. All staff receive training on confidentiality issues, including FERPA, once a year.

Vendors

Tapestry's full inclusion model resists the practice of placing students with IEPs in self-contained classes once they reach middle school or high school age. Our small class size, co-teaching model,

individualized instruction, and emphasis on differentiation and accommodation create an educational environment that is successful for a wide range of students. We strive to provide all services within a fully inclusive environment and find that for most of our students, the co-teaching model becomes their least restrictive environment. Students who require additional support from a special education teacher will receive small group instruction in a resource setting.

Occasionally, students will require more intensive supports than Tapestry offers. The DCSD Lead Teacher for Special Education (LTSE) sits in on all IEP meetings and assists when the team makes a decision to place the student in a more restrictive environment. During the IEP meetings, the parent is presented with options for services and assists in making the placement decisions as part of the team. Tapestry does not offer a self-contained classroom as this is not compatible with our inclusion model. As our Local Education Agency (LEA), DeKalb provides a full continuum of services, including self-contained classrooms, at schools other than Tapestry.

DCSD provides a licensed psychologist to conduct formal evaluations, which determine special education eligibility; a speech-language pathologist to provide speech and language support; and an occupational therapist to support students with fine motor skill deficiencies and sensory needs. The DCSD Lead Teacher for Special Education oversees the evaluation, identification, and individualization of instruction for students who need related services. The LTSE works collaboratively with parents and school staff to provide differentiated instruction, intervention strategies and techniques, and other related services to maximize student learning. Tapestry does not contract with any other special education vendors.

Technical Assistance and Training

To support Tapestry's full inclusion co-teaching model, all general education and special education teachers participate in professional development opportunities that help build their capacity in the areas of promising instructional practices, compliance with state and federal statutes, reporting

requirements, and use of instructional data. The Leadership Team develops an annual training plan, in collaboration with Tapestry's Academic Excellence Committee, that meets the unique needs of the school.

Annual training, led by school administration and outside consultants, is provided on an assortment of topics that drive effective and inclusive instructional practices. Topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL). The UDL instructional strategy allows all students to have access to the curriculum by offering options for how information is presented, how students respond or demonstrate their knowledge and skills, and how students are engaged in learning. UDL includes differentiation and accommodations;
- Effective co-teaching practices. Teachers receive training on all six co-teaching instructional approaches and the variations of teaming for maximum targeted assistance. These practices include flexible groupings and small group instruction;
- Social Emotional Engagement-Knowledge and Skills (SEE-KS). With assistance from the Educational Outreach Department of the Marcus Autism Center, all teachers participate in SEE-KS training in order to increase the academic engagement of each and every student. Using an appreciative inquiry approach, teachers coach each other to implement instructional practices that increase the independence, initiation, and emotional investment of all students;
- Standards-Based Assessment and Student Monitoring.

All teachers receive a daily 90-minute planning time in which they create lesson plans and unit maps that incorporate UDL, co-teaching, SEE-KS, and differentiation including small group instruction. Their use of UDL, co-teaching practices, SEE-KS, and differentiation are monitored for quality and fidelity through coaching from the Academic Support Teacher/Lead Special Education teacher and Autism Specialist, with additional monitoring of lesson plans provided by administration, monthly teacher data talks, and frequent classroom observations in which teachers receive immediate feedback.

Co-teachers utilize planning time to reflect on classroom practices and student data in order to make decisions about all aspects of their lessons. Classroom instruction includes whole group, small group, and individual support. Small groups instruction is based on data received from students' unit assessments. Students who don't master specific standards are given additional opportunities and differentiation to enable them to understand the concepts and skills. Student groups may also be created based on formative assessments that happen throughout the lesson, such as exit slips and specific skill quizzes. Students also participate in groupings based on interests or personalities when they work on projects or read a common book.

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, SPED teachers will receive targeted professional development in Specially Designed Instruction (SDI). SDI allows for increased differentiation and personalization of the curriculum, leading to more effective instruction. SDI instructional techniques will add an additional layer to the current co-teaching instructional approaches used by the Tapestry teaching staff. Specially Designed Instruction will allow the special education teacher to determine the knowledge and skills required for a unit of study and then directly teach those skills to the students. At the same time, the general education teacher can focus on the specific content, thereby ensuring that students receive a more balanced instructional program. By focusing on SDI, the special education teacher will be able to support the content teacher to more effectively differentiate and target the instruction.

Although Tapestry SPED teachers do not currently participate in DCSD training, the district remains a valuable partner in the effective implementation of services for students with disabilities. Moreover, the DCSD SPED division provides critical consultative support for Tapestry's Principal and SPED Coordinator as our Special Education Program has grown.

SPED Staffing

Tapestry's special education staffing needs are re-evaluated monthly and annually and determined by the number of students, severity of needs and types of services to be provided, and individual IEP goals. We employ a Special Education Coordinator who ensures compliance with all

federal regulations regarding special education. The SPED Coordinator oversees the IEP process for all students, reviews IEPs, and works closely with the district to ensure compliance with applicable laws and reporting requirements.

In 2017-2018, Tapestry employed 13 highly qualified, special education teachers, who manage delivery of IEP-mandated services, oversee IDEA compliance, and provide classroom instructional support through the co-teaching model. In the 2018-2109 school year, Tapestry employs 15 special education teachers. Out of the 15 special education teachers, four are pursuing alternative certification and have applied for provisional certificates. The other 11 special education teachers have consultative certifications. Seven special education teachers also have content specific special education certification in ELA, Math, Science, Social Science and/or Reading. Five Special Education teachers also have content area certification for middle or high school in the areas of ELA, Math, or Science. Each core content subject is co-taught by a general education and special education teacher to maintain small class sizes and opportunities for individualized learning.

The special education team is also supported by an autism specialist and two inclusion facilitators. The autism specialist works with classroom teachers to ensure that all students have structure, order, and predictability. While these aspects are integral to supporting students on the autism spectrum, they also help create an instructional foundation that allows all students to thrive. Under the supervision and guidance of the autism specialist, the inclusion facilitators work directly with students to ensure that they are emotionally regulated and ready to learn.

In the 2017-2018 school year, Tapestry employed 16 paraprofessionals for students who required one-to-one support to assist with engagement, transitions, and safety. Most of the students enter Tapestry with paraprofessional support written into their IEPs. In the 2018-2019 school year, it is projected that we will employ 13 paraprofessionals. As Tapestry grows in its ability to provide organic supports for students in the classroom, the need for one-to-one paraprofessionals is expected to decrease.

- 5. Describe how the charter school provides state-and-federally-mandated services for English Learners (ELs). Reciting the requirements of law and rule is insufficient. Your description must include the diagnostic methods or instruments that are used to identify and assess those students, as well as the instructional program that is provided to ELs. Describe how student progress is monitored post-exit from the ESOL program, including staff roles, frequency, and types of data/documents reviewed. Identify the thresholds for exiting a student from the ESOL program. Indicate what if any supports and services are provided to students in the post-exit phase.**

Guided by the school's mission, Tapestry offers an inclusive, individualized learning environment that embraces the cultural and linguistic differences of the student body. Tapestry complies with all applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations related to the education of English Learners (ELs). Early identification of ELs is a priority to ensure that students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) receive the appropriate academic and social supports necessary for long-term success. A Home Language Survey is included in the enrollment package of each newly admitted student. If a family indicates that a language other than English is spoken in the home, the student is assessed with the Word-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Screener proficiency test to determine if he/she is eligible for language support services. Incoming student records are also reviewed to determine if English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services have been provided in any previous educational setting.

If a student is determined to need ESOL services, parents are notified in writing within 30 days of the start of the school year for continuing ELs, or within two weeks from the date of identification for new ELs. Parents also receive notification of their right to waive ESOL services for their child.

In the 2017-2018 school year, less than 1% of Tapestry's students received ESOL services. Due to targeted recruitment, Tapestry has raised its percentage of students receiving ESOL services from less than 1% to 6% for the 2018-2019 school year. This increase was due to a determined effort to market the

Tapestry model to neighborhood schools. We will continue our marketing and outreach efforts to ensure that the percentage increases to better reflect our community. Tapestry recently developed an ESOL Resource Guide to support staff, students, and families in the identification, placement, support, and monitoring of our English Learners. (See [ESOL Resource Guide in Appendix D.](#))

There is one dedicated teacher for the EL population who uses the push-in approach for instruction, allowing students with LEP to be fully integrated into the regular classroom environment. The ESOL support teacher assists the general education teachers by interpreting WIDA scores and outlining student expectations based on the results. In addition, the ESOL support teacher provides strategies and techniques to classroom teachers on the best methods to appropriately modify the curriculum to meet individual learning needs. The existing co-teaching model at Tapestry provides additional academic support across all content areas. This approach allows for greater collaboration among our staff and a sense of shared responsibility in meeting the needs of ELs. In anticipation of an increase in the number of students who will need language assistance, Tapestry has hired an ESOL endorsed teacher for the 2018-2019 academic year.

Students receiving ESOL services are assessed annually between January-March using WIDA ACCESS to measure language growth and development in the domains of speaking, reading, listening, and writing. The ESOL teacher meets with all ESOL students on a daily basis for a 50-minute segment for grades 6-8 and 55-minute segment for grades 9-12. A block class of 90 minutes counts as 2 segments. The English Learners at Tapestry receive instruction through the ESOL program in one of two ways, depending on the English needs of the students:

- Pull-out. The ESOL teacher removes the students from the classroom to provide small group language instruction. This language instruction focuses on social language.
- Push-In. English Learners remain in the classroom to receive content instruction in language arts, mathematics, science, and/or social studies from the content teacher along with language instruction from the ESOL teacher. The language instruction focuses on the form and function of

the language needed to complete the required work in class.

The ESOL teacher and content teachers review the progress of each student every 4.5 weeks to determine if changes need to be made in the instructional strategies. Students in the ESOL program may still require instructional accommodations and will receive them as part of the regular classroom instruction.

When a student exits the ESOL program, the ESOL teacher will continue to monitor academic growth for two years after the student exits the program. At the end of each reporting period, the ESOL teacher will meet with content teachers to determine if the student is adjusting and succeeding academically and to identify any specific needs.

All classroom teachers receive an overview of ESOL services at the beginning of the year. The ESOL teacher reviews the supports and services required for each individual student with the appropriate content teacher. In planning instruction, teachers incorporate the following instructional strategies for their ESOL students:

- Allow longer wait time for oral responses
- Shorten or reduce number of assignments
- Use lower grade level or alternative materials to support instruction
- When appropriate, grade for effort and progress
- Allow a student to retake a test if test performance is out of line with classroom performance
- Repeat key concepts
- Introduce new vocabulary in context instead of in isolation
- Use graphic organizers (KWL charts, vocabulary preview, etc.)
- Use hands-on activities to build students' prior knowledge
- Model for students (step-by-step directions)
- Provide opportunity for students to take class notes
- Provide visual clues to accompany text/lecture

As the result of effective marketing to our neighborhood, we are expecting the 6% ESOL population to rise. To prepare for the increase in second language students, Tapestry will adjust the professional development and instruction to better meet their needs.

2018-2019

1. Implement professional development on instructional strategies for ESOL students and language-based small group instruction;
2. ESOL teacher and administration will develop a plan to integrate more language instruction in the core content areas focusing on Forms and Functions of Language in the 2019-2020 school year;
3. Support content teachers to receive ESOL certification;
4. Include instructional strategies for ESOL in all lesson plans;
5. Monitor language growth of all ESOL students.

2019-2020

1. Increase ESOL support either through certification of current teacher or hiring of additional teachers;
2. Provide year-long professional development on Forms and Functions of Language;
3. Integrate language objectives in lesson planning;
4. Support content teachers to receive ESOL certification;
5. Include instructional strategies for ESOL in all lesson plans;
6. Monitor language growth of all ESOL students;
7. Make adjustments in professional development plan for 2020-2021.

2020-2021

1. Continue with ESOL program and make adjustments as necessary.

The amount of time a student spends receiving language support services varies based on the student's proficiency level. The ACCESS test determines if he/she will remain eligible for ESOL services

or whether it is appropriate for the student to exit the program. ELs who score at or above proficiency level 5 on ACCESS are considered English proficient and no longer in need of language assistance. The ESOL support teacher continually monitors student performance in reading and writing and on benchmark tests and end-of-year assessments for two years once he/she is exited from the program. If monitoring reveals that a student might benefit from re-entry into the ESOL program or be provided with supplemental services such as tutoring, his/her needs are discussed with all decision makers, including the parents, in order to make a placement determination. In addition to our dedicated ESOL program, Tapestry's English Learners benefit from the small class sizes, low student-teacher ratio, and supportive culture, all of which facilitate second language acquisition. Moreover, Tapestry's inclusive environment provides the assurance that English learners can fully participate in all clubs and extracurricular activities, which provide authentic opportunities for positive acculturation and the development of English language skills.

- 6. Explain how the charter school determines which students need remediation in each core content area, and the frequency in which this is monitored. Describe the methods, strategies, and instructional programs the charter school uses to provide remediation for students at risk for academic failure. Include how the structure of the day is impacted to provide intentional remediation. Describe your multi-tiered support system (such as RTI), including gifted and talented. The description of the multi-tiered support system should include the specific academic and behavior interventions used for different tiers, who is responsible for such interventions, and for how long and with what frequency certain interventions are tracked prior to referral for special education.**

Determination of Eligibility

Tapestry believes that each student is entitled to high quality instruction, using a standards-based curriculum. Through differentiation, small group instruction, and co-teaching, the teaching staff provides

Tier 1 instructional support for all students. This instructional support is monitored through frequent formal and informal assessments.

During the first few weeks of school, teachers closely monitor student performance on classroom assignments, informal/formal assessments, quizzes, and tests to determine which students may be “at risk” for academic underperformance. Additionally, student baseline data is collected using the easyCBM platform, which provides real-time performance data to help facilitate good instructional decision making. The easyCBM software uses a variety of curriculum-based measures in the content areas of early literacy, oral reading fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and math. The previous year’s Milestones results are also used to identify students who may need to build foundational reading and math skills. Students performing at the “Beginner Learner” level on the Milestones and the “Needs Remediation” level on the easyCBM are referred for Tier 2 supports.

Strategies, Methods, and Instructional Program

All students referred for Tier 2 supports receive an in-class intervention plan developed by the student’s teacher, with assistance from the counselor and administration. This in-class intervention plan clarifies the student’s current level of performance, documents areas of concern, and outlines a specific plan to differentiate, modify, and individualize instruction for that student utilizing Tier 2 strategies.

The teacher implements the strategies and collects data on the students. After six weeks of intervention, the teacher, counselor, and administrator meet to determine progress on the Tier 2 supports. If the student is making adequate progress, the interventions will stay in place until such time as the academic gap is resolved. If, however, progress hasn’t been made, the team decides whether to continue with interventions or try a different approach.

Students receiving Tier 2 interventions are monitored every six weeks throughout the year. Students not progressing, despite targeted interventions, are referred to the Student Support Team (SST). The SST reviews all interventions and either selects additional approaches or refers the student for Special Education testing.

For the 2018-2019 school year, Tapestry has hired a Literacy Specialist. This Literacy Specialist will assist teachers in determining appropriate Tier 2 interventions and will provide individual Tier 2 support for identified students.

Tapestry's educational model is intentionally designed to meet the unique needs of each individual learner. Instruction is personalized, giving teachers an opportunity to easily identify struggling students. Based on the results of formal/informal assessments and teacher observations, students are placed in flexible learning groups in all content areas to maximize growth. In addition, teachers are trained annually in the principles of Universal Design for Learning in order to differentiate instruction and alter educational strategies. Tapestry utilizes the co-teaching model in all core content classes with both a general education teacher and a special education teacher. This structure ensures that all students receive specialized, highly differentiated support and instruction in each class based on learning profiles and/or behavioral needs.

The school Counselor oversees the RTI administrative process (proper documentation, meetings, implementation of interventions) while the Principal and Assistant Principal meet with the general education and special education teachers weekly to monitor the learning rate, level of performance, and overall effectiveness of the interventions.

Extended class time is provided for students at both the high school and the middle school level. At the high school level, Tapestry's school day is broken into 90-Minute Blocks to allow sufficient time to immerse all students in the core content. At the middle school level, all students participate in a 60-minute "What I Need" (WIN) time.

Through the use of extended class time at both the high school and middle school, teachers can offer interventions for students who are struggling in addition to acceleration activities for students identified as gifted.

During the high school block or middle school WIN, students receive at least 30 minutes of remediation support 2-3 times per week at the Tier 2 level. In addition to classroom/homework

differentiation, flexible learning groups, co-teaching, and extended class time, Tapestry leverages the following strategies to accelerate growth for students needing additional support:

- Read Naturally reading program (for reading fluency)
- ALEKS mathematics program
- After school and during school tutoring
- Instruction in study skills, social skills, and organization skills
- Multi-sensory instruction
- Social/Emotional/Behavioral Counseling
- Collaboration with Specials/Elective teachers

Referral for Special Education Services

Students who do not show academic/social/emotional/behavioral improvements after receiving Tier 2 supports are referred to the Student Support Team (SST) for Special Education evaluation. Licensed service professionals (Social Worker, Speech Language Pathologist, Behavioral Specialist, Physical/Occupational Therapists) may be consulted to further assess student needs and provide additional support. Referral for special education services will only be made once all of the resources of the general education program have been exhausted.

- 7. Provide the number and percentage of students receiving In-School Suspensions, Out-of-School Suspensions, or Expulsions during the current charter term (e.g., the past 5 years). How does this discipline and dismissal data compare to the Office of Civil Rights data?**

	In-School Suspensions		Out-of-School Suspensions			Expulsions
Ethnicity/Race	Number & Percentage of Total Population					
Latino Hispanic	0	0%	4	Less than 1%	0	0%
American Indian	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Asian / Pacific Islander	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Black / African American	9	1.5%	19	3.2%	0	0%
White	6	1.0%	19	3.2%	0	0%
Two or More Races	1	Less than 1%	0	0%	0	0%
Total Population (580)	16	2.7%	42	7.2%	0	0%

According to the Office of Civil Rights Data (OCR) from the 2015-2016 academic year (the most recent information available), Tapestry had a total enrollment of 128 students with:

- 6 In-School Suspensions (ISS)
- 16 Out-of-School Suspensions (OSS)
- 0 Expulsions

Tapestry's 2015-2016 data is significantly lower than DCSD for both ISS (9%) and OSS (11%).

Overall, Tapestry has low suspension and expulsion rates with an equitable distribution among black and white students as a result of progressive disciplinary practices, staff training, and robust social/emotional supports designed to keep students in school, on task, and engaged with their learning. All Tapestry students are expected to behave in a manner that is conducive to learning. Within a supportive environment, Tapestry students go to class on time, complete schoolwork and homework and treat adults and peers with respect.

The job of the Tapestry staff is to teach students how to act in a manner that promotes a positive

school culture for everyone. The tool we use to teach students these skills is called “Keeping it R.E.A.L.” R.E.A.L stands for Respect, Engaged, Active, Learners. Keeping it R.E.A.L promotes a positive school environment and teaches students both self-awareness and awareness of others. This policy will continue to build on our school culture of tolerance, acceptance, and empowerment.

Respect: Students and staff are expected to treat each other with respect at all times. Staff uses proactive, problem-solving language when interacting with students and students learn to use academically appropriate language and behaviors when interacting with adults and peers.

Engaged: Students and staff are to be fully engaged in the educational environment and to be productive members of the Tapestry team.

Aware: Students and staff are expected to be alert and active in the environment around them. Part of being an active member of the Tapestry team involves being aware of one’s own physical space and respecting the physical space of others.

Learners: Learning is what our school is all about. We all participate fully in the learning process and see ourselves as inquisitive, curious, and persistent in pursuit of knowledge.

Students are expected to keep it R.E.A.L. across all school environments. During the first two weeks of school, advisory teachers explore with students what it means to be R.E.A.L at Tapestry. Visuals are posted in each classroom and across all school environments reminding students of appropriate behaviors.

Tapestry is a school that celebrates neurodiversity. To that end, some students, due to their neurological makeup, will exhibit behaviors that, to an outsider, deserve a severe consequence. However, a better strategy for these students is to explicitly teach them expected forms of behavior, thereby eliminating the need for a consequence. If a staff member feels a consequence is warranted, he/she

contacts the student's case manager for consultation.

The first responses to all inappropriate behavior (except Level 5-7 behaviors as outlined in the DeKalb Code of Student Conduct) are redirection, student teacher conference, problem solving, and re-teaching. Students are responsible for Keeping it R.E.A.L., but it is the adult's job to model, remind, and redirect inappropriate behavior. Sometimes consequences can be a natural result of inappropriate behavior. The purpose of a consequence is to extinguish a behavior. If a student is receiving the same consequence over and over again, and the behavior does not change, then the staff members need to re-address the problem from a different angle. Case managers, administration, counselors, Dean of Students, and Autism Specialist can assist staff members in determining the appropriate next steps. Tapestry also follows the DCSD Code of Student Conduct. The Code of Student Conduct also outlines levels of behaviors and interventions and consequences that match the level of the disruption to learning.

8. Describe in detail any difficulties faced during the charter term that were not already addressed above, how the school dealt with such difficulties, and if they remain an issue for the school. Also explain how the school plans to avoid these difficulties during the upcoming charter renewal term.

The overarching challenge that Tapestry has faced and will continue to face is the fact that we are creating a completely unique school model for which there is no blueprint. To our knowledge, there is no other school in the district, state, or nation providing a fully inclusive secondary education for such a large percentage of students with disabilities. Our efforts to innovate teaching and to individualize learning for our neurodiverse students are continuously met with support; at the same time, we often face challenges in the form of policies or traditional views of education that have the potential to undermine our mission. Nonetheless, we believe that Tapestry's success is directly tied to our commitment to our mission and the power of vision.

A specific challenge that Tapestry will face next year and during the next charter term is related to diploma requirements. We will graduate our first class of seniors in 2019. According to the Governor's Office of Student Achievement Graduation Report, the Georgia graduation rate for students with disabilities (SWDs) was 58.9% in 2017, which is still 21.7% behind their general education peers. The SWDs graduation rate in DeKalb County is even lower at 47%.

Currently in Georgia, there is only one diploma option. Students not meeting the diploma requirements will receive a Certificate of Performance, which is not equivalent to a High School Diploma. Approximately 7% of Tapestry's 11th and 12th graders are not on track to graduate in the next two years. Some of these students may be able to complete graduation requirements within five years. Others, due to the nature and severity of their disability, may be unable to master the content of some of the more challenging high school courses, even with appropriate accommodations. A student's inability to graduate with a high school diploma, in addition to his/her disability, can significantly restrict the student's future opportunities (i.e. employment, college enrollment).

The diploma track offered in Georgia may have been designed with good intentions, i.e., to increase academic rigor for all students, but it fails to thoughtfully consider a large group of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities have the possibility to receive a high school diploma through a nontraditional path, via the Georgia Alternative Assessment (GAA), but they must declare this choice by the 8th grade. Also, while the GAA does provide a path to a diploma, its design is ostensibly only for students with the most significant disabilities. Students with disabilities who have the desire to learn, work hard, and pursue Georgia's college preparatory diploma, but who may need more time or curricular modifications, are devalued by policies that prescribe the courses they must pass within a four-year time frame. The time frame discriminates against students with developmental disabilities who simply cannot work at the same pace as others, yet who strive to pass their courses and pursue a regular diploma.

The traditional view that four years is an appropriate amount of time for every student to complete high school, which is codified in policy, undoubtedly results in the dropout rate of students with

disabilities in Georgia's schools. Furthermore, this time frame is punitive to schools when their students do not finish the required coursework within the designated time. Some students, both with and without disabilities, may need more than four years to develop the social-emotional intelligence and adaptive skills needed to ensure their success in college and the workplace. Students with autism are especially vulnerable because of their core deficits with communication and social interaction. In spite of these challenges, Tapestry will continually seek the best methods for accommodating and supporting students in order to help them receive the credits needed for a high school diploma and postsecondary success. We are invested in our students as individuals, and our goal is to help each of them find their own unique path to happiness.

Students with disabilities have a Transition Plan to assist them to learn the knowledge and skills necessary to reach their goals after high school. While formal Transition Plans are put into place in eighth grade, IEPs for the students in 6th and 7th grade are developed based on success for post-secondary life, aligned with the transitional supports and services of Tapestry, and largely informed by student and parent input.

Starting in eighth grade, every student at Tapestry has an Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) that details the courses needed to graduate. This IGP is the basis for the Transition Plans for the students with disabilities. Transition Plans are reviewed and modified at each successive IEP after eighth grade. Tapestry is uniquely situated to provide transitional support for our graduating seniors through our supportive classrooms, Transition Consortium, Internship Program, partnerships with research entities, and relationship with Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

Supportive Classrooms

Over 50% of our graduating seniors are students with disabilities. These students are completing the requirements for a High School Diploma because of our co-teaching model as well our commitment to differentiation and accommodation for all students. Students who have attended Tapestry since its inception have benefitted from the supportive environment through their middle school years and are able

to tackle the tougher high school courses with continued differentiation and accommodation.

Transition Consortium

Tapestry has established a Transition Consortium comprised of partners who are experts in the field of transition and representatives from local colleges. This Consortium is assisting Tapestry staff to ensure that each and every senior graduate into their chosen field of college, career, or work.

Internship Program

Each of our seniors will have the opportunity to participate in an Internship program in their last semester of their senior year. Tapestry has hired an Internship Coordinator whose job is to develop relationships between students and businesses. Through the internship program students will receive training in job skills such as resume writing, interviewing strategies, and skills related to specific jobs.

Research Partnership

Tapestry is engaged in a research study with the Emory Autism Center regarding transitional services for students on the autism spectrum. Students participating in the study are currently receiving a comprehensive transition assessment which will result in a transition plan specific to the child.

Tapestry is looking to use these assessments as a model for the establishment of transition plans for all students beginning in eighth grade that would follow them through their senior year and beyond.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Tapestry and the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) are working together to support students with IEPs who may not be going directly to college or who may not be graduating with a high school diploma. One case worker has been assigned to all the students with IEPs at Tapestry in order to ensure a smooth transition. Each child will receive support according to their individual needs.

In addition, GVRA and Tapestry are collaborating to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) directly to Tapestry so that our students can benefit from specific job training skills.

Tapestry offers all four Georgia Department of Education Career Pathways:

- Advanced Academics

- World Languages
- Fine Arts
- CTAE

The two CTAE pathways currently offered at Tapestry are Game Design and Engineering Drafting & Design. Students in the two CTAE pathways will participate in the assessment for the certificate in each of these fields. Currently, Tapestry does not have non-technology career pathways that would benefit students who may not be on course for a high school diploma. Tapestry is looking into funding sources and other partnership opportunities to increase vocational-type classes at the school.

Furthermore, a strategic priority for our Governing Board and school administration is to develop a plan to better serve students who are at risk of not graduating. To minimize the negative impact graduating without a high school diploma can have on student life outcomes, Tapestry welcomes an opportunity to discuss alternative diploma options with DCSD and the Georgia Department of Education to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to the same opportunities as their general education peers.

PROPOSED CHANGES

If the answers given above to questions 1 - 8 reflect a change to any of the following, please provide the rationale for the change:

ACADEMIC CHANGES:

- **The academic program and curriculum.**
- **The use of waivers/innovations.**
- **School programs – this includes Students with Disabilities, Gifted and Talented, English Learners, etc.**
- **Any assessments being used.**
- **Any administrative positions.**

Over the past five years, Tapestry has made significant advances in curriculum and assessments in order to enhance student learning outcomes and meet the expectations of the Georgia Standards of Excellence. Tapestry has also remained committed to developing a more rigorous math and English Language Arts (ELA) program to accelerate student growth on the Milestones assessment. As previously mentioned, we faced challenges with the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) as an instructional strategy. Over the next charter term, Tapestry staff will receive training in PBL from an established source such as the Buck Institute for Education (BIE) in order to maintain fidelity to the philosophy of project-based learning as well as ensuring that students master Georgia's Standards of Excellence.

To accelerate growth in ELA, Tapestry has hired a Literacy Specialist and begun the implementation of the Fast Forward Reading Program to support students who are reading below grade level. The Literacy Specialist has two major tasks: professional development for teachers in the area of reading, and implementation of a schoolwide literacy program. Beginning with middle school in 2018-2019 and moving to the high school in 2019-2020, the Literacy Specialist will work with ELA teachers in implementing a literacy program that includes independent reading with teacher conferencing, literature circles, book clubs, modeling of reading strategies, and writing.

The schoolwide literacy program will be introduced in 2018-2019 with an emphasis on increasing the quality and quantity of books each student reads. Student surveys will be taken at the beginning of the year, and teachers and students will track the amount of reading they accomplish. We will track our progress as a school and set goals every year.

The Fast Forward Reading program will be used for all struggling readers. Beginning with Tier 2 support, students will receive intensive intervention on the program with frequent monitoring. The program will also be used for students at Tier 3 and Tier 4 levels of support. The Literacy Specialist will oversee the program and work with teachers to monitor progress and adapt the program to meet the needs

of the students. Middle school students will receive the Fast Forward intervention support during their regularly scheduled What I Need (WIN) time every day. High school students will receive the intervention as part of their reading or math support class.

Tapestry staff have been working towards aligning their end-of-unit assessments with the rigor of the standards. With assistance from a consultant, the teachers have analyzed their assessments and made modifications to ensure that they are directly assessing the standards. Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, teachers will use the end-of-unit assessments as a way to monitor growth. The current MAP assessment, while providing valuable information, doesn't necessarily align with the timeline of the standards being taught in the classroom. By using end-of-unit assessments, teachers will be able to assess student growth every 6 weeks and provide remediation or review on specific standards.

Special education teachers will receive additional training and implement Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) during the 2018-2019 school year. SDI, which is identified in every child's IEP, is the adaptation of the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability and to ensure that the student has access to the general curriculum so that the child can meet the standards. The Special Education teacher will be trained to provide instruction that is based on the student's IEP and the requirements of the standards.

Tapestry will continue to offer a fully inclusive learning environment, with an emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM) education. During the next charter term, Tapestry will seek more opportunities to integrate STEAM across the curriculum through community partnerships and authentic, hands-on learning experiences. Tapestry will be seeking GaDOE STEAM certification in the next three years. From the first day of the charter, technology has been an integral part of the learning structure at Tapestry. Every student has a Chromebook, and the teachers use Google Classroom as a management system. Over the past few years, Tapestry has developed

makerspaces, where students have an opportunity to participate in engineering practices and to solve real world problems. With each successive year, Tapestry has developed its music, art, and drama programs. Our fine arts teachers work with their content specific peers to develop integrated lessons, such as using musical notation to understand the concept of fractions and illustrating the parts of a cell in a specific artistic style. In the 2018-2019 school year, the integration of subjects, technology, and engineering practices in all classrooms will be further developed. We are scheduled for a visit from the Georgia Department of Education in October 2018 to review our program and give us feedback on developing the program further in order to receive full STEAM certification in the coming years. No changes are proposed related to the use of waivers and administrative positions.

GOVERNANCE CHANGES:

- **The school's governance structure.**
- **The school's governing board composition.**
- **The school's relationship with an Educational Service Provider or other Charter Partner.**
The relationship with the local district.
- *The increase of diversity among the members.*

There will be no major changes to the school's governance structure or composition. However, as vacancies arise, Tapestry will continue to look broadly for a diverse pool of applicants with the professional expertise necessary to provide effective oversight and for those who do not have children that attend the school.

A strategic initiative for the next charter term is to cultivate mutually beneficial community partnerships in support of Tapestry's mission. The school will capitalize on opportunities to expand existing partnerships and create new relationships that afford students access to broader learning experiences and relevant professional development for staff. Tapestry values the support received from DCSD and the partnership that has been established during this charter term. There are no proposed plans to change the nature of this relationship.

FINANCIAL CHANGES:

- **The school's financial structure.**
- **The school's CFO.**
- **The school's relationship with any major creditors (e.g., landlords, investors etc.)**

Tapestry has raised over six million dollars from a variety of donors in its short life. In addition, Tapestry has garnered the support of a number of crucial partners who believe in and enhance Tapestry's mission. Tapestry's historic success combined with its relatively short lifespan evidence the community support for the vision of this school. Tapestry intends to continue to build on its existing relationships to expand financial and community support in the next charter term. There are no proposed changes to Tapestry's financial/staffing structure.

OPERATIONAL CHANGES:

- **The school's facilities – this should include any proposed expansion or renovations.**
- **The school's attendance zone and any enrollment priorities being used (see O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a)(1)).**
- **Whether the school will utilize a weighted lottery to provide an increased chance of admission for educationally disadvantaged students pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066(a)(1) and State Board Rule 160-4-9-.05(2)(g).**
- ***Racial and socioeconomic demographics in an effort to align with the District.***
- **Any services provided to students such as transportation, food service, etc.**
- **The grades the charter school will serve. Please note this includes adding additional grades or reducing current grades.**

Tapestry was originally located in Northeast Baptist Church at 4046 Chamblee Tucker Road. However, in 2015 we moved into our current facility at 3130 Raymond Drive in Doraville. Due to the generous support of an anonymous donor, we currently do not have a lease payment for the facility. As

previously mentioned, if conditions of the agreement are met and our charter contract is renewed, the building will be gifted to the school. Tapestry's current facility will meet its needs through the next charter term. If additional funds do become available, there are many opportunities for improvement, but none are required to fulfill Tapestry's mission through the next charter term.

Tapestry will continue to allow the following enrollment priorities:

1. Priority admission will be given first to siblings, including those selected during the lottery process or those of already enrolled Tapestry students.
2. Priority admission will be given next to children of full-time staff or board members, regardless of whether they reside within the DCSD.

Tapestry values all forms of diversity including racial, ethnic, and socio-economic. Our current racial demographic is comparable to DCSD; however, in an effort to recruit more traditionally underserved students such as English Language Learners, Latinos/Hispanics, and low-income families from the surrounding Doraville community, [we have created a diversity plan which is attached as Exhibit 31](#). The goals are to increase the number of Hispanic students and economically disadvantaged students, each by 5%, by year three. According to the Diversity Plan, a weighted lottery will be considered in year two to be used in year three if the school has failed to reach targeted numbers through the various action items and outreach efforts outlined in the plan. However, it seems a weighted lottery will not be necessary based on the success of only one year of targeted recruitment. From 2017-2018 to 2018-2019, Tapestry's percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch has increased from 9% to 25%, and the number of Hispanic students has increased from 8% to 12%.

We will continue to monitor progress toward diversity goals throughout the next charter term and amend our strategies and/or implement a weighted lottery if necessary. This will include an analysis of the composition of different grade levels to establish recruitment goals. Community partners - the traditional public schools, local places of worship, and social service agencies, such as the Latin

American Association - have been essential in helping us with targeted outreach, and our marketing partners have assisted with the design of effective marketing campaigns.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

9. Briefly describe how the school has and will continue with its proposed changes to serve the needs of its students for the upcoming (renewed) charter term.

Tapestry has developed the following SMART goals aligned with our Strategic Plan to serve as checkpoints during the upcoming charter term:

2018-2019

- By May 2019, the performance rate on the CCRPI will increase by the following:
 - Middle School
 - ELA from 40.2 to 43
 - Math from 34.5 to 38
 - High School
 - Ninth Grade Lit and Composition from 46.5 to 49
 - Coordinate Geometry from 31.03 to 33.
- By May 2019, 50% of our students will demonstrate typical or high growth on the Milestones
- By May 2019, the middle school staff will have participated in 20 hours of professional development on the STEAM initiative, including at least half of those hours learning about Design Thinking.
- By May 2019, Tapestry middle school teachers will create units of study that integrate art, music, technology, and drama into the content areas and include Design Thinking and Engineering Principles.
- By May 2019, Tapestry classrooms will rate a 3.5 on the SEE-KS rating scale for student engagement.

- By May 2019, 100% of Tapestry seniors will have viable transition plans.
- By May 2019, Tapestry will develop a partnership with Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services to provide Pre-ETS services to Tapestry students

2019-2020

- By May 2020, the performance rate on the CCRPI will increase by the following:
 - Middle School
 - ELA from 43 to 46
 - Math from 38 to 41
 - High School
 - Ninth Grade Lit and Composition from 46.5 to 52
 - Coordinate Geometry from 33 to 35.
- By May 2020, 55% of our students will demonstrate typical or high growth on the Milestones
- By May 2020, Tapestry will prepare and receive STEAM program certification from Georgia Department of Education
- By May 2020, Tapestry's Internship program will include STEAM businesses.
- By May 2020, Tapestry's high school teachers will develop integrated curriculum with an emphasis on Design Thinking and Engineering principles.
- By May 2020, Tapestry will have investigated and hired consultants to deliver PBL training to staff
- By May 2020, Tapestry classrooms will rate a 3.5 - 3.8 on the SEE-KS rating scale for student engagement.
- By May 2020, 100% of Tapestry seniors will have viable transition plans.
- By May 2020, Tapestry will research and develop a plan to include more vocational opportunities for students who are transitioning to the workforce.

2020-2021

- By May 2021, the performance rate on the CCRPI will increase by the following:
 - Middle School
 - ELA from 46 to 49
 - Math from 41 to 44
 - High School
 - Ninth Grade Lit and Composition from 52 to 55
 - Coordinate Geometry from 35 to 37.
- By May 2021, 60% of our students will demonstrate typical or high growth on the Milestones
- By May 2021, Tapestry will prepare and receive school-wide STEAM certification from Georgia Department of Education
- By May 2021, Tapestry teacher will participate in 20 hours of PBL training
- By May 2021, Tapestry classrooms will maintain a 3.5 - 3.8 on the SEE-KS rating scale for student engagement.
- By May 2021, 100% of Tapestry seniors will have viable transition plans.

In accordance with our mission, Tapestry is committed to providing all students with an inclusive, individualized, and supportive learning environment as we move into our next charter term. The early identification of challenges and the implementation of evidence-based solutions has contributed to the improvement in our academic performance, especially as it relates to students with disabilities. Despite the fact that Tapestry serves 55% students with disabilities (SWDs), we are still outperforming nearly 50% of DeKalb County middle and high schools, each of which serves a significantly lower percentage of students with disabilities. Moving forward, we will continually refine our practices to improve student achievement through regular progress monitoring, data disaggregation, and targeted individual learning supports. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and end-of-unit assessments will be used in all grades and all classes for progress monitoring.

The Board and school leadership team will also work together to cultivate community partnerships that bring enrichment activities to our students and help diversify our student body. Beginning in 2018-2019, we will implement more rigorous marketing techniques to the Doraville community to increase the percentage of Latino/Hispanic and free/reduced lunch students. We have already begun marketing Tapestry events on community forums and websites.

We believe that a fully inclusive learning environment, in which students on the autism spectrum are flourishing, breaks from the educational status quo and can serve as a model for schools and districts across the nation. Accordingly, as we continue to find solutions to our unique challenges such as accountability and diploma requirements, we look forward to opportunities to share what we've learned and work with DeKalb and the state to ensure our students are afforded equal opportunities for continued success.



Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent

"Educating Georgia's Future"

O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1(e)(2) Affidavit

By executing this affidavit under oath, as an applicant for a charter school contract from the State Board of Education, as referenced in O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1, 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:

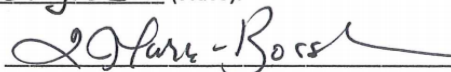
The undersigned applicant also hereby verifies that he or she is 18 years of age or older and has provided at least one secure and verifiable document (e.g., driver's license, passport, birth certificate), as required by O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1(e)(1), with this affidavit.

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

Driver's License

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 Atlanta (city), Georgia (state).



Signature of Governing Board Chair

Tonna Harris-Bosselmann

Printed Name of Governing Board Chair

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN
BEFORE ME ON THIS THE

30 DAY OF April, 2018

Robin L. Aldrich

NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires:



DeKalb County School District
JULY 24, 2017 • Page 15 of 19

ASSURANCES FORM AND SIGNATURE SHEET

Georgia law and State Board of Education Rule requires your school to 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 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 the school's governing board chair.

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter for (*name of school*) located in 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 U.S. and Georgia Constitutions;
3. Shall not discriminate against any student or employee on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, national origin, gender, disability, age, or sexual orientation;
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.* (Open and Public Meetings) and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 *et seq.* (Open Records);
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 members receive initial training and annual training thereafter, provided by a SBOE-approved vendor pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2072 and State Board of Education Rule 160-4-9-.06;
9. Shall ensure that the charter school's governing board adopts and abides by a conflict of interest policy;
10. Shall comply with O.C.G.A. §20-2-210(b)(1) and implement an evaluation system as adopted and defined by the State Board of Education for elementary and secondary school teachers of record, assistant principals, and principals;
11. 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;
12. 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;
13. Shall provide state and federally mandated services for English Language Learners, as applicable;

DeKalb County School District

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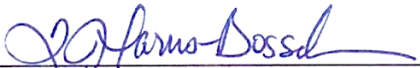
14. Shall provide for supplemental educational services as required by federal law and pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.03, and for remediation in required cases pursuant to SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.01;
15. Shall notify the state of any intent to contract with a for-profit entity for education and/or management services;
16. Shall notify the state of any changes in for-profit entity contracted with for education and/or management services;
17. 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;
18. Shall comply with federal due process procedures regarding student discipline and dismissal;
19. Shall be subject to all laws relating to unlawful conduct in or near a public school;
20. Shall have a written grievance procedure to resolve student, parent, and teacher complaints;
21. Shall have a written procedure for resolving conflicts between the charter school and the local board of education;
22. Shall comply with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20 -2-211.1 relating to fingerprinting and criminal background checks;
23. Shall remit payments to TRS on behalf of employees and shall employ teachers in accordance with TRS;
24. Shall ensure that if transportation is provided for its students, the school shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws;
25. Shall ensure that if the charter school participates in federal school meals programs, then it shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws and rules;
26. 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;
27. 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;
28. 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;
29. Shall be subject to an annual financial audit conducted by the state auditor or by an independent certified public accountant licensed in this state;
30. Shall designate a Chief Financial Officer that meets all requirements as established by the Charter Schools Rule 160-4-9-.05(2)(h)(1);
31. 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;
32. Shall acknowledge that all criteria used to calculate QBE funding may not be waived;
33. Shall ensure that 90% of QBE funds earned for out-of-system students enrolled in a virtual school must be spent on their instruction pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167.1; and

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34. 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 Charter School's Governing Board on the 16th day of July, 2018



Governing Board Chair, Charter School

8/2/18

Date

This Charter School Application, Assurance Form, and attached Exhibits were approved by the _____ Board of Education on the _____ day of _____, 2018.

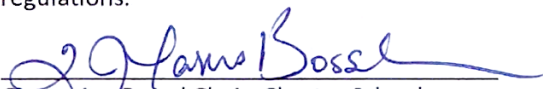
Chair, Local Board of Education

Date

Superintendent, 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.



Governing Board Chair, Charter School

8/2/18

Date

Chair, Local Board of Education

Date

Superintendent, Local Board of Education

Date

EXHIBITS

The following Exhibits are required to complete your Charter School Renewal Application Package. Please tab the Exhibits to match the item numbers below. Exhibits should be as limited in size as possible.

1. Attach an official copy of the certificate of incorporation for the required Georgia nonprofit corporation from the Georgia Secretary of State. Please Note: All charter school contracts—including those of start-up and conversion charter schools—must be held by a Georgia nonprofit corporation.
2. Attach a copy of the by-laws for the nonprofit corporation.
3. Attach a copy of the governing board's Conflict of Interest Policy.
4. Attach a copy of the governing board's Conflict of Interest Form.
5. Attach a copy of the governing board's Governance Training Plan using the governance training memo available on GaDOE's website.
6. Attach a completed Locally-Approved Charter School Partners Roles and Responsibilities chart. This chart shows the balance of authority between the charter school's board and management, as well as the autonomy of the charter school from the district.
7. Attach a copy of any admissions (pre-lottery) application the charter school proposes to use. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2066 and SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.05, any admissions application must conform to the open enrollment requirement. Therefore, admissions applications should be limited to a student's name, contact information, home address for the purpose of verifying the student's residence within the school's attendance zone, grade level, and information required for any enrollment preference, such as identifying a sibling already enrolled at the charter school. If the charter school proposes to utilize a weighted lottery for educationally disadvantaged students, the admissions application may also include questions tailored to the subgroup(s) the school will offer an increased chance of admission according to the weighted lottery guidance available on GaDOE's website.
8. Attach a copy of the policy setting annual enrollment, re-enrollment, and lottery deadlines, including a description of the lottery procedures detailing how enrollment priorities will be applied and an assurance of complete transparency in its procedures.
9. Attach the charter school's annual calendar and the charter school's daily school schedule.
10. Attach a copy of the scope and sequence for each proposed course/grade level.
11. Attach a copy of the charter school's Student Code of Conduct.
12. Attach a copy of the charter school's Student Discipline Policy and Procedures, including any Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS).
13. Attach a copy of the rules and procedures concerning how the school will address grievances and complaints from students, parents, and teachers. Include the role the governing board will play in resolving such grievances and complaints. If this included in another response, please indicate that.
14. Attach a copy of the charter school's Employee Policies and Procedures.
15. Attach proof of the school's insurance coverage, including the terms, conditions, and coverage amounts.
16. Attach a copy of any intended education service provider contracts or arrangements for the provision of education management or support services, including with any EMO, CMO, ESO, etc. Such contracts shall describe the specific services for which the contracting organization is responsible. Such contracts should clearly delineate the respective roles and responsibilities of the management organization and the governing board in the management and operation of the charter school. Such contracts must also include the fee structure.
17. Attach a copy of any agreements with your local school district or Board of Education
18. Attach a copy of any Letters of Intent and/or agreements detailing any proposed partnerships, including agreements with other local schools/systems for the charter school students' participation in extracurricular activities such as interscholastic sports and clubs.
19. Attach a copy of any MOU/lease/proof of ownership for the school's facility.
20. Attach a copy of the school's Certificate of Occupancy.
21. Attach a copy of the facility's Emergency Safety Plan.

22. Complete and attach the budget template located on the Charter Schools Division's website: Please note that the budget template includes:
- ☐ A monthly cash flow projection detailing revenues and expenditures for the charter school's first two (2) years of operation;
 - ☐ A spreadsheet projecting cash flow, revenue estimates, budgets, and expenditures on an annual basis for the first five (5) years of the charter term.
 - ☐ Back-up documentation proving the legal reality of additional sources of revenue included in the budget template – i.e., funds other than state and local funding, including bank statements and/or signed grant award letters
23. Attach the résumé for the charter school's Chief Financial Officer.
24. Attach the charter school's signed Assurances Form (see below).
25. Attach the charter school's signed and notarized Affidavit (see below).
26. Attach the charter school's signed Local Board of Education Resolution approving the charter school's application.
27. Attach the charter school's signed Governing Board Resolution approving the charter school's application. This will serve as the formal petition to the SBOE.
28. For conversion schools only, attach the charter school's Confirmation of Teacher and Parent Vote.
29. *Attach full response to all Governing Board Observations conducted by the DCSD Charter Office.*