

Senate Bill 39

By: Senators Weber of the 40th, Moody of the 56th, Williams of the 19th, Tarver of the 22nd, Carter of the 13th and others

AS PASSED

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 31 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to charter schools, so as to enact the "Charter Systems Act"; to provide for legislative
3 findings; to provide for the establishment of charter systems; to revise and add definitions;
4 to provide for the establishment of the Charter Advisory Committee; to provide for
5 requirements for petitions for charter systems; to revise certain provisions relating to the
6 approval or denial of a charter petition; to revise certain provisions relating to the review of
7 charters; to provide for terms and renewals of charter systems; to provide for waivers and
8 operating requirements, control, and management for charter systems; to provide for
9 termination of charter systems; to revise certain provisions relative to funding of charter
10 schools; to change certain provisions relative to the Office of Charter School Compliance;
11 to revise provisions for purposes of conformity; to provide for related matters; to provide for
12 effective dates; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

13 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:**

14 **SECTION 1.**

15 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Charter Systems Act."

16 **SECTION 2.**

17 The General Assembly finds that schools and school systems should be given high flexibility
18 to tailor their educational programs to meet the unique needs of their communities. In
19 furtherance of this, schools and school systems should be encouraged to use innovative
20 educational programs including local management of schools and should be provided
21 resources to help design and implement innovative programs. The General Assembly further
22 finds that schools and school systems shall be held accountable for student achievement.

SECTION 3.

Article 31 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the "Charter Schools Act of 1998," is amended in Code Section 20-2-2062, relating to definitions, by revising paragraphs (1), (2), (8), and (11), by renumbering paragraph (5.1), and by inserting new paragraphs (3.1), (5.1), (12.1), and (17), as follows:

"(1) 'Charter' means a performance based contract between a local board and a charter petitioner, the terms of which are approved by the local board and by the state board in the case of a local charter school, ~~or~~ between the state board and a charter petitioner, the terms of which are approved by the state board in the case of a state chartered special school, or between a local board and the state board, the terms of which are approved by the state board in the case of a charter system. By entering into a charter, a charter petitioner and local board shall be deemed to have agreed to be bound to all the provisions of this article as if such terms were set forth in the charter."

"(2) 'Charter petitioner' means a local school, local board of education, private individual, private organization, or state or local public entity that submits a petition for a charter. The term 'charter petitioner' does not include home study programs or schools, sectarian schools, religious schools, private for profit schools, private educational institutions not established, operated, or governed by the State of Georgia, or existing private schools."

"(3.1) 'Charter system' means a local school system that is operating under the terms of a charter pursuant to Code Section 20-2-2063.1."

"(5.1) 'Governing council' means a school level council of parents, teachers, administrators, and others who are involved in school level governance within a charter system.

~~(5.1)~~(5.2) 'High school cluster' means a high school and all of the middle and elementary schools which contain students who matriculate to such high school. The schools in a high school cluster may include charter schools, local schools, or a combination of both."

"(8) 'Local revenue' means local taxes budgeted for school purposes in excess of the local five mill share, combined with any applicable equalization grant and budgeted revenues from any of the following: investment earnings, unrestricted donations, and the sale of surplus property; but exclusive of revenue from bonds issued for capital projects, revenue to pay debt service on such bonds; and local option sales tax for capital projects, ~~and budgeted school food service program costs~~. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to prevent a local board from including a local charter school in projects specified in the ballot language of a local option sales tax or bond referendum."

"(11) 'Petition' means a proposal to establish a charter school or a charter system."

"(12.1) 'School level governance' means decision-making authority in personnel decisions, financial decisions, curriculum and instruction, resource allocation,

1 establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, and school
 2 operations."

3 "(17) 'System charter school' means a school within a charter system."

4 **SECTION 4.**

5 Said article is further amended in Code Section 20-2-2063, relating to minimum
 6 requirements for charter petitions, by adding a new subsection to the end of such Code
 7 section as follows:

8 "(d) The State Board of Education shall establish rules, regulations, policies, and
 9 procedures to provide for a charter petition from a local school system to establish a charter
 10 system. Such rules, regulations, policies, and procedures shall require that a charter
 11 petition and the charter contain an explanation of the structure, rights, and responsibilities
 12 of the principal, governing council, and local board of education of the system charter
 13 school, with an objective of maximizing school level governance and the involvement of
 14 parents, teachers, and community members in such governance."

15 **SECTION 5.**

16 Said article is further amended by adding new Code sections as follows:

17 "20-2-2063.1.

18 (a) The state board shall establish a Charter Advisory Committee to review charter
 19 petitions for compliance with established standards of the state board, to make
 20 recommendations to the state board on charter policy, and to provide recommendations to
 21 the state board regarding charter petitions. The committee shall be composed of nine
 22 members as follows:

23 (1) Three members appointed by the chairperson of the state board;

24 (2) Three members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor; and

25 (3) Three members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

26 All members shall serve at the pleasure of their respective appointing officials. The
 27 committee shall elect a chairperson from among its membership.

28 (b) The committee shall conduct itself in accordance with any rules and guidelines
 29 established by the state board with regard to timeframes, procedures, and protocol.

30 (c) The committee shall be authorized to request clarifying information from a charter
 31 petitioner and to receive input from interested parties on a charter petition.

32 (d) The committee shall:

33 (1) Make recommendations to the state board of approval or denial on each charter
 34 petition and shall specify the reasons for such recommendations;

35 (2) Periodically make recommendations to the state board regarding charter policy; and

- 1 (3) Make recommendations to the state board on the disbursement of planning grants for
 2 charter systems, if funds are made available.
- 3 (e) The committee shall be authorized to enter into contracts, subject to available funding,
 4 with one or more consultants to assist the committee in its duties and if directed to do so
 5 by the committee, to do the following:
- 6 (1) Assist charter petitioners in the drafting of their petitions;
 7 (2) Assist charter petitioners in the design and implementation of innovative education
 8 programs and school level governance based on research, model programs, or other
 9 credible information;
- 10 (3) Monitor and assist charter schools and charter systems; and
 11 (4) Perform any other functions related to the support of the committee.
- 12 (f) The committee shall work in cooperation with the Office of Charter School
 13 Compliance, as established pursuant to Code Section 20-2-2069.
- 14 (g) The members of the committee shall receive no compensation for their services but
 15 shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred by them in carrying out
 16 their duties.
- 17 (h) The committee shall be assigned to the Department of Education for administrative
 18 purposes only, as prescribed in Code Section 50-4-3.
- 19 20-2-2063.2.
- 20 (a) The state board shall be authorized to enter into a charter with a local board to establish
 21 a local school system as a charter system.
- 22 (b) A local board seeking to create a charter system must submit a petition to the state
 23 board. Prior to submitting such petition, the local board shall:
- 24 (1) Adopt a resolution approving the proposed charter system petition;
 25 (2) Conduct at least two public hearings and provide notice of the hearings in the same
 26 manner as other legal notices of the local board; and
 27 (3) Send a notice to each principal within the local school system of the hearings with
 28 instructions that each school shall distribute the notice to faculty and instructional staff
 29 members and to the parent or guardian of each student enrolled in the school.
- 30 The local board may revise its proposed charter system petition, upon resolution, as a result
 31 of testimony at the public hearings or for other purposes.
- 32 (c) Prior to approval or denial of a charter petition for a charter system, the state board
 33 shall receive and give all due consideration to the recommendation and input from the
 34 Charter Advisory Committee established in Code Section 20-2-2063.1. The state board
 35 shall approve the charter if the state board finds, after receiving input from the Charter
 36 Advisory Committee, that the petition complies with the rules, regulations, policies, and

1 procedures promulgated pursuant to Code Section 20-2-2063 and the provisions of this
2 title, is in the public interest, and promotes school level governance.

3 (d) All schools within an approved charter system shall be system charter schools except
4 as otherwise provided in subsections (f) and (g) of this Code section.

5 (e)(1) Subject to appropriations by the General Assembly or other available funding, the
6 state board, after receiving input and recommendations from the Charter Advisory
7 Committee, shall disburse planning grants to local school systems which desire to
8 become charter systems. Such grants will be disbursed in accordance with any applicable
9 guidelines, policies, and requirements established by the state board.

10 (2) Subject to specific appropriations by the General Assembly for this purpose, the state
11 board shall disburse implementation grants in the amount of \$125,000.00 or such other
12 amount as determined by the state board to each charter system. The state board shall be
13 authorized to approve up to five petitions for charter systems during fiscal year 2008, and
14 may approve up to a maximum number of petitions in following years as may be
15 established pursuant to board rules and as subject to availability of funding for
16 implementation grants.

17 (f) A system charter school shall not be precluded from petitioning to become a conversion
18 charter school, in accordance with Code Section 20-2-2064, not subject to the terms of the
19 system charter. In the event a system charter school becomes a conversion charter school,
20 the system charter shall be amended to reflect that such school is no longer bound by the
21 system charter.

22 (g) An existing conversion or start-up charter school within a local school system which
23 is petitioning to become a charter system shall have the option of continuing under its own
24 existing charter, not subject to the terms of the system charter, or of terminating its existing
25 charter, upon agreement by the local board and state board, and becoming subject to the
26 system charter as a charter system school."

27 **SECTION 6.**

28 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-2064, relating to approval or
29 denial of petition, as follows:

30 "20-2-2064.

31 (a) A charter petitioner seeking to create a conversion charter school must submit a
32 petition to the local board of the local school system in which the proposed charter school
33 will be located. The local board must by a majority vote approve or deny a petition no later
34 than 60 days after its submission unless the petitioner requests an extension; provided,
35 however, that a denial of a petition by a local board shall not preclude the submission to
36 the local board of a revised petition that addresses deficiencies cited in the denial; and

1 provided, further, that the local board shall not act upon a petition for a conversion charter
2 school until such petition:

3 (1) Has been freely agreed to, by secret ballot, by a majority of the faculty and
4 instructional staff members of the petitioning local school at a public meeting called with
5 two weeks' advance notice for the purpose of deciding whether to submit the petition to
6 the local board for its approval; and

7 (2) Has been freely agreed to, by secret ballot, by a majority of parents or guardians of
8 students enrolled in the petitioning local school present at a public meeting called with
9 two weeks' advance notice for the purpose of deciding whether to submit the petition to
10 the local board for its approval.

11 This subsection shall not apply to a system charter school petitioning to be a conversion
12 charter school.

13 (b) A charter petitioner seeking to create a start-up charter school must submit a petition
14 to the local board of the local school system in which the proposed charter school will be
15 located. The local board must by a majority vote approve or deny a petition no later than
16 60 days after its submission unless the petitioner requests an extension. A denial of a
17 petition by a local board shall not preclude the submission to the local board of a revised
18 petition that addresses deficiencies cited in the denial.

19 (c) A system charter school's school council or governing council, as applicable, may
20 petition to become a conversion charter school. The petition shall be submitted to the local
21 board of the charter system in which the school is located. The local board must by a
22 majority vote approve or deny a petition no later than 60 days after its submission unless
23 the petitioner requests an extension; provided, however, that a denial of a petition by a local
24 board shall not preclude the submission to the local board of a revised petition that
25 addresses deficiencies cited in the denial.

26 ~~(e)~~(d) A local board shall approve a petition that complies with the rules, regulations,
27 policies, and procedures promulgated in accordance with Code Section 20-2-2063 and the
28 provisions of this title and is in the public interest. If a local board denies a petition, it must
29 within 60 days specifically state the reasons for the denial, list all deficiencies with respect
30 to Code Section 20-2-2063, and provide a written statement of the denial to the charter
31 petitioner and the state board.

32 ~~(d)~~(e) The state board or the Charter Advisory Committee, if directed by the state board
33 to do so, may mediate between the local board and a charter petitioner whose petition was
34 denied to assist in resolving issues which led to denial of the petition by the local board."

SECTION 7.

Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-2064.1, relating to review of charter by state board, as follows:

"20-2-2064.1.

(a) Prior to approval or denial of a charter petition under this Code section, the state board shall receive and give all due consideration to the recommendation and input from the Charter Advisory Committee established in Code Section 20-2-2063.1.

(b) The state board shall approve the charter of a charter petitioner if the petition has been approved by the local board of the local school system in which the proposed charter school will be located and the state board finds, after receiving input from the Charter Advisory Committee, that the petition complies with the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures promulgated in accordance with Code Section 20-2-2063 and the provisions of this title and is in the public interest. If the state board denies a petition, it must within 60 days specifically state the reasons for the denial, list all deficiencies with regard to Code Section 20-2-2063, and provide a written statement of the denial to the charter petitioner and to the local board.

~~(b)~~(c) No application for a state chartered special school may be made to the state board by a petitioner for a conversion charter school that has been denied by a local board. Upon denial of a petition for a start-up charter school by a local board and upon application to the state board by the petitioner, the state board shall approve the charter of a start-up charter petitioner for a state chartered special school if the state board finds, after receiving input from the Charter Advisory Committee, that such petition meets the requirements set forth in Code Section 20-2-2063 and the provisions of this title, and is in the public interest."

SECTION 8.

Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-2065, relating to operating requirements, control, and management, as follows:

"20-2-2065.

(a) Except as provided in this article or in a charter, a charter school, or for charter systems, each school within the system, shall not be subject to the provisions of this title or any state or local rule, regulation, policy, or procedure relating to schools within an applicable school system regardless of whether such rule, regulation, policy, or procedure is established by the local board, the state board, or the Department of Education; provided, however, that the state board may establish rules, regulations, policies, or procedures consistent with this article relating to charter schools. A waiver granted pursuant to this Code section for a charter system shall apply to each system charter school within the

1 system. In exchange for such a waiver, the charter school agrees to meet or exceed the
 2 performance based goals included in the charter and approved by the local board or, for the
 3 charter system, the system agrees to meet or exceed the system-wide performance based
 4 goals included in the charter and approved by the state board, including but not limited to
 5 raising student achievement. For a charter system, the charter shall delineate the
 6 performance based goals that the system and each school will be expected to meet as well
 7 as the criteria by which a system charter may be revoked in addition to those contained in
 8 Code Section 20-2-2068.

9 (b) In determining whether to approve a charter petition or renew an existing charter, the
 10 local board and state board shall ensure that a charter school, or for charter systems, each
 11 school within the system, shall be:

12 (1) A public, nonsectarian, nonreligious, nonprofit school that is not home based,
 13 provided that a charter school's nonprofit status shall not prevent the school from
 14 contracting for the services of a for profit entity and that nothing in this Code section
 15 shall preclude the use of computer and Internet based instruction for students in a virtual
 16 or remote setting;

17 (2) Subject to the control and management of the local board of the local school system
 18 in which the charter school is located, as provided in the charter and in a manner
 19 consistent with the Constitution, if a local charter school;

20 (3) Subject to the supervision of the state board, as provided in the charter and in a
 21 manner consistent with the Constitution, if a state chartered special school;

22 (4) Organized and operated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of this state;
 23 provided, however, that this paragraph shall not apply to any charter petitioner that is a
 24 local school, local school system, or state or local public entity;

25 (5) Subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes
 26 relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of the physical health and safety of
 27 school students, employees, and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the
 28 prevention of unlawful conduct;

29 (6) Subject to all laws relating to unlawful conduct in or near a public school;

30 (7) Subject to an annual financial audit conducted by the state auditor or, if specified in
 31 the charter, by an independent certified public accountant licensed in this state;

32 (8) Subject to the provisions of Part 3 of Article 2 of Chapter 14 of this title, and such
 33 provisions shall apply with respect to charter schools whose charters are granted or
 34 renewed on or after July 1, 2000;

35 (9) Subject to all reporting requirements of Code Section 20-2-160, subsection (e) of
 36 Code Section 20-2-161, Code Section 20-2-320, and Code Section 20-2-740;

1 (10) Subject to the requirement that it shall not charge tuition or fees to its students
2 except as may be authorized for local boards by Code Section 20-2-133; and

3 (11) Subject to the provisions of Code Section 20-2-1050 requiring a brief period of
4 quiet reflection."

5 SECTION 9.

6 Said article is further amended in Code Section 20-2-2066, relating to admission, enrollment,
7 and withdrawal of students, by adding a new subsection as follows:

8 "(b.1) A charter system shall enroll students in its system charter schools per the terms of
9 the charter and in accordance with state board rules."

10 SECTION 10.

11 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-2067.1, relating to amendment
12 of terms of charter for charter school, initial term of charter, and annual report, as follows:

13 "20-2-2067.1.

14 (a) The terms of a charter for a local charter school may be amended during the term of
15 the charter upon the approval of the local board, the state board, and the charter school.

16 The terms of a charter for a state chartered special school may be amended during the term
17 of the charter upon the approval of the state board and the charter school. The terms of a
18 charter for a charter system may be amended during the term of the charter upon approval
19 of the state board and the local board.

20 (b) The initial term of a charter, except for a charter system, shall be for a minimum of five
21 years, unless the petitioner shall request a shorter period of time, and shall not exceed ten
22 years. The local board and the state board, in accordance with Code Section 20-2-2064.1,
23 may renew a local charter, upon the request of the charter school, for the period of time
24 specified in the request, not to exceed ten years. The state board may renew a state
25 chartered special school, upon the request of the school, for the period of time specified in
26 the request, not to exceed ten years. The initial term of a charter for a charter system shall
27 not exceed five years. The state board may renew the charter of a charter system, upon the
28 request of the local board, for the period of time specified in the request, not to exceed ten
29 years.

30 (c) ~~★~~ Each start-up and conversion charter school and each charter system shall submit an
31 annual report outlining the previous year's progress to the authorizing local board or state
32 board, as appropriate; to parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school, or, for
33 a charter system, to parents and guardians of students enrolled in school within the local
34 school system; and to the Department of Education no later than October 1 of each year.
35 The report submitted by a charter system shall include, but not limited to, data on all of its
36 system charter schools. The report shall contain, but is not limited to:

- 1 (1) An indication of progress toward the goals as included in the charter;
- 2 (2) Academic data for the previous year, including state academic accountability data,
3 such as standardized test scores and adequate yearly progress data;
- 4 (3) Unaudited financial statements for the fiscal year ending on June 30, provided that
5 audited statements will be forwarded to the local board and state board upon completion;
- 6 (4) Updated contact information for the school and the administrator, and for charter
7 systems, each system charter school and its respective administrator;
- 8 (5) Proof of current nonprofit status, if applicable; ~~and~~
- 9 (6) Any other supplemental information that the charter school or charter system chooses
10 to include or that the state board requests that demonstrates its that school or system's
11 success; and
- 12 (7) For charter systems, an on-site external evaluation of the system at least once every
13 five years, as determined by the state board."

14 SECTION 11.

15 Said chapter is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-2068, relating to charter
16 amendments and terminations, as follows:

17 "20-2-2068.

18 (a) The state board may terminate a charter under the following circumstances:

19 (1)(A) If a majority of the parents or guardians of students enrolled at the charter
20 school vote by a majority vote to request the termination of its charter at a public
21 meeting called with two weeks' advance notice and for the purpose of deciding whether
22 to request the state board to declare the charter null and void; or

23 (B) If a majority of the faculty and instructional staff employed at the charter school
24 vote by a majority vote to request the termination of its charter at a public meeting
25 called with two weeks' advance notice and for the purpose of deciding whether to
26 request the state board to declare the charter null and void;

27 This paragraph shall not apply to system charter schools.

28 (2) If, after providing reasonable notice to the charter school or charter system, as
29 applicable, and an opportunity for a hearing, the state board finds:

30 (A) A failure to comply with any recommendation or direction of the state board with
31 respect to Code Section 20-14-41;

32 (B) A failure to adhere to any material term of the charter, including but not limited to
33 the performance goals set forth in the charter;

34 (C) A failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management;

35 (D) A violation of applicable federal, state, or local laws or court orders;

1 (E) The existence of competent substantial evidence that the continued operation of the
 2 charter school or charter system would be contrary to the best interests of the students
 3 or the community; or

4 (F) A failure to comply with any provision of Code Section 20-2-2065; or

5 (3) Upon the written request of a local board for termination of a charter for a local
 6 charter school located within its school system if, prior to making such request, the local
 7 board provided reasonable notice to the charter school and an opportunity for a hearing,
 8 and determined the existence of any of the grounds described in paragraph (2) of this
 9 Code section.

10 (b) For a system charter school, if the school council or governing council, as applicable,
 11 at such school within the charter system requests that:

12 (1) The system charter be terminated; or

13 (2) The system charter be amended with respect to such system charter school;

14 the state board, after providing reasonable notice to the charter system and the system
 15 charter school, shall conduct a hearing. Based on the findings of the hearing, the state
 16 board may enter into negotiations with the charter system to amend the charter to address
 17 the concerns of the requesting system charter school. If negotiations fail and the state
 18 board finds good cause, the state board shall be authorized to terminate the system charter
 19 or to amend the system charter with respect to the requesting system charter school;
 20 provided, however, that the local board shall be authorized to terminate the system charter
 21 if it is unwilling to accept the amendments to such charter by the state board. 'Good cause'
 22 includes but is not limited to a local board's failure to comply with its obligations and
 23 duties under the system charter, state board rules, or other applicable law, or other good
 24 cause as determined in the sole discretion of the state board."

25 SECTION 12.

26 Said chapter is further amended in Code Section 20-2-2068.1, relating to application of the
 27 Quality Basic Education Formula, grants, local tax revenue, and funds from local bonds, by
 28 revising subsections (a) and (c) as follows:

29 "(a) A local charter school shall be included in the allotment of QBE formula earnings,
 30 applicable QBE grants, applicable non-QBE state grants, and applicable federal grants to
 31 the local school system in which the local charter school is located under Article 6 of this
 32 chapter. The local board and the state board shall treat a conversion charter school no less
 33 favorably than other local schools located within the applicable local school system unless
 34 otherwise provided by law. The local board and the state board shall treat a start-up charter
 35 school no less favorably than other local schools within the applicable local system with

1 respect to the provision of funds for instruction, ~~and school administration, and, where~~
 2 ~~feasible~~, transportation, food services, and, where feasible, building programs."

3 "(c) In addition to the earnings set out in subsection (b) of this Code section, local revenue
 4 shall be allocated to a local charter school on the same basis as for any local school in the
 5 local school system. In the case of a start-up charter school, local revenue earnings shall
 6 be calculated as follows:

7 (1) Determine the total amount of state and local five mill share funds earned by students
 8 enrolled in the local start-up charter school as calculated by the Quality Basic Education
 9 Formula pursuant to Part 4 of Article 6 of this chapter including any funds for
 10 psychologists and school social workers but excluding five percent of any system-wide
 11 funds for central administration ~~and pupil transportation~~ and excluding any categorical
 12 grants not applicable to the charter school;

13 (2) Determine the total amount of state and local five mill share funds earned by all
 14 students in the public schools of the local school system, including any charter schools
 15 that receive local revenue, as calculated by the Quality Basic Education Formula but
 16 excluding categorical grants and other non-QBE formula grants;

17 (3) Divide the amount obtained in paragraph (1) of this subsection by the amount
 18 obtained in paragraph (2) of this subsection; and

19 (4) Multiply the quotient obtained in paragraph (3) of this subsection by the school
 20 system's local revenue.

21 The product obtained in paragraph (4) of this subsection shall be the amount of local funds
 22 to be distributed to the local start-up charter school by the local board; provided, however,
 23 that nothing in this subsection shall preclude a charter petitioner and a local board of
 24 education from specifying in the charter a greater amount of local funds to be provided by
 25 the local board to the local start-up charter school if agreed upon by all parties to the
 26 charter. Local funds so earned shall be distributed to the local start-up charter school by
 27 the local board. Where feasible and where services are provided, funds for ~~transportation,~~
 28 ~~food service programs,~~ and construction projects shall also be distributed to the local
 29 start-up charter school as earned. In all other fiscal matters, including applicable federal
 30 allotments, the local board shall treat the local start-up charter school no less favorably than
 31 other local schools located within the applicable school system and shall calculate and
 32 distribute the funding for the start-up charter school on the basis of its actual or projected
 33 enrollment in the current school year according to an enrollment counting procedure or
 34 projection method stipulated in the terms of the charter."

SECTION 13.

Said chapter is further amended in Code Section 20-2-2068.1, relating to application of the Quality Basic Education Formula, grants, local tax revenue, and funds from local bonds, by adding a new subsection to read as follows:

"(h) For system charter schools, funds including federal, state, and local revenue shall be distributed to each such school by the charter system in a manner and in such amounts as are provided in the terms of the charter with an objective of maximizing spending at the school level."

SECTION 14.

Said chapter is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-2069, relating to the Office of Charter School Compliance, as follows:

"20-2-2069.

There is established within the Department of Education an Office of Charter School Compliance, the responsibilities of which shall be to:

(1) Prepare charter school and charter system guidelines to be approved by the state board;

(2) Distribute charter school and charter system petition information to inquiring parties;

(3) Process all charter school and charter system petitions and coordinate with the Charter Advisory Committee established pursuant to Code Section 20-2-2063.1 to facilitate its review and recommendations to the state board for consideration by the state board;

(4) Administer any state or federal charter school implementation grant program;

(5) Contract with an independent party to evaluate the performance of charter schools and charter systems, as such performance relates to fulfilling the terms of their charters; and

(6) Compile information necessary to produce the annual report required by Code Section 20-2-2070."

SECTION 15.

(a) Section 12 of this Act shall become effective on July 1, 2008 and shall apply beginning in the 2008-2009 school year and every year thereafter; provided, however, local school systems shall plan for such changes to the law pursuant to Section 12 of this Act and take all necessary measures with regard to budgeting prior to such effective date.

(b) All other sections of this bill shall be effective July 1, 2007.

- 1 **SECTION 16.**
- 2 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.