

## STATE CHARTER SCHOOL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Name of Proposed Charter School: Spring Creek Charter Academy

Proposed Opening Date: August 2019 Proposed Charter Term: July 2019-June 2024

### Student Enrollment

Grade Range: K-12 Will the School Enroll All Grades the First Year? (Yes/No): No

Expected Initial Enrollment: 276 Proposed Full Enrollment: 598

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

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Yr 1	46	46	46	46	46	46	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	276
Yr 2	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	0	0	0	0	0	0	322
Yr 3	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	0	0	0	0	0	368
Yr 4	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	0	0	0	0	414
Yr 5	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	0	0	0	460

*Research shows that charter schools are more academically, financially and organizationally stable if they grow by only one grade each year. If the charter school plans to grow more than 1 grade each year, please provide a brief rationale for this growth model in 350 words or less in the box below.*

Not Applicable – We will only grow by one grade level per year.

***\*Please note that the SCSC reserves the right to condition expansion and increased enrollment on the charter school's ability to meet performance goals and compliance requirements.***

*To be completed only if seeking a statewide attendance zone:* *In fewer than 350 words, please provide a comprehensive justification and rationale for a statewide attendance zone. Indicators of the need for a statewide attendance zone include, but are not limited to: pre-enrollment of students from a large geographic area with multiple districts; multiple, widespread, documented marketing efforts, governing board representation from a large geographic area, a proposed facility well situated to serve a large geographic area or a comprehensive transportation plan.*

Not Applicable – We will not have a statewide attendance zone.

*Enrollment Priorities – if the proposed school will use any enrollment priorities as authorized by Georgia law, please rank them in order of application below.*

Rank	Priority
<b>2</b>	A sibling of a student enrolled in the start-up charter school
<b>NA</b>	A sibling of a student enrolled in another local school designated in the charter
<b>1</b>	A student whose parent or guardian is a member of the governing board of the charter school or is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee at the charter school
<b>NA</b>	Student matriculating from a local school designated in the charter
<b>NA</b>	Children who matriculate from a pre-kindergarten program which is associated with the school, including, but not limited to, programs which share common facilities or campuses with the school or programs which have established a partnership or cooperative efforts with the school

## Mission and Academic Program

*In the box below, use fewer than 350 words to state the proposed charter school's mission and describe why this initiative is meaningful or important to your group. Also provide a brief description of any defining features of the proposed school.*

The mission of Spring Creek Charter Academy (SCCA) will be the same as the mission of Pataula Charter Academy (PCA), which is "to prepare students for life-long success by partnering with families and communities to create a safe, nurturing learning environment that engages and challenges students, fosters creativity, and instills integrity and leadership skills that inspire students to reach their full potential". We strongly believe in every aspect of this mission. We also believe keeping it front and center in every decision we have made has led to PCA's success.

SCCA will use the same whole-school educational model, the Expeditionary Learning (EL) model, as well. We will focus on replicating the innovative aspects of PCA's model in four critical areas: curriculum, instruction, assessment, and school climate. (The areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment will be discussed in a later section of this application.) We feel PCA's school climate is attributed to the structure and process we used to create our mission and core beliefs and an intentional, pervasive focus on those throughout our school.

The leadership at PCA believes a positive school climate is vital to a successful learning environment. PCA's positive school climate is probably the aspect that most appeals to families at our school. We intend to recreate PCA's positive school climate at SCCA by using research-based best practices and innovative strategies from the EL model. This starts with establishing a climate of learning through clear school-wide expectations and a high level of accountability. Traditions are also very important to creating the family-like feel. Teaching character and building relationships through daily "Crew" meetings is another critical strategy. Celebrating successes through monthly Community Circles and periodic Celebration of Learning nights are a few ways we promote a positive relationship with families and communities.

*In the box below, use fewer than 350 words to describe the proposed charter school's academic program, specifically focusing on its innovation and need for flexibility and any special characteristics, such as a special population, a special curriculum, or some other feature or features which enhance educational opportunities.*

SCCA will use the same whole-school educational model, the Expeditionary Learning (EL) model. We will focus on replicating the innovative aspects of this model in four critical areas: curriculum, instruction, assessment, and school climate:

Much of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment aspects of the model are simply research-based best practices; such as standards alignment, curriculum mapping, using guiding questions, etc. Some unique features of the curriculum are the use of case studies, Learning Expeditions, projects/products, fieldwork, experts, and service learning. A few of the innovative features of the instructional model are the use of “protocols”, integration of subjects, inquiry-based lessons, teacher as facilitator, and cooperative collaboration. A growth mindset is an important belief that helps drive the assessment piece of the model. Standards-based assessing and reporting is at the core, but a few innovative assessment strategies that further enhance student ownership in his/her learning are student portfolios, self- assessing, goal setting, reflections, peer critiques, and student-led conferences.

## Operations

*In the box below, use fewer than 350 words to describe the proposed charter school’s organizational structure, specifically focusing on its relationship with the existing charter school, its general partnership structure with an educational management organization (ESP) if any, and the school’s community interest and need.*

The existing Pataula Charter Academy, Inc. non-profit Governing Board will also serve as the Governing Board of Spring Creek Charter Academy. It is the intent of the Board to create a Replication Committee of community members from the SCCA attendance zone to assist with the planning stages, including acting as an advisory board in decision making. Once approved several members from this committee will be chosen to become members of the Governing Board. It is our intent to maintain a diverse board with representation from both schools’ attendance zones.

Leadership will also be consistent at both schools, as several staff including the current Superintendent and CFO of PCA, will have oversight of both schools. We intend to structure leadership much in the manner of a traditional LEA with multiple schools in one district. This will include “central staff”, such as Superintendent, CFO, Special Ed Director, Data Manager, etc. to ensure oversight and consistency at both schools.

We are confident that structuring our organization in this way will create a seamless replication with the ability to maintain the policies, procedures, and processes that help make PCA a success.

SCCA will not partner with an educational management organization.

We have already begun to engage community members and parents in the proposed attendance zone. We have held 3 large community meetings, one in each county. We have created a Facebook page with close to 300 followers already. We have also engaged local Superintendents and Boards. Preliminary surveys and attendance at meetings show that we will have enough interest to meet our

attendance targets.

Local educators have expressed concern that a school of choice in their communities may create racial-division. Despite many obstacles with this, PCA has been able to increase the minority population by approximately 10% over the last several year. We are continuing to work on this area and have created a marketing plan that focuses specifically on creating diverse populations for both schools. We will continue to work hard to ensure that ALL parents and students in these communities understand that SCCA is a free, public school that values diversity.

*In fewer than 350 words, describe the school facility that the charter school will use and its location as well as contingency plans should the school's primary facility plans prove unsuccessful. State whether the school facility and contingencies are new or existing. If the facility plans for the charter school have not been finalized, the narrative should describe prospective facilities and the steps the charter school is taking to attain a permanent facility.*

SCCA has two options in Miller County for a potential facility. Our primary option is an unused middle school that the district deeded to the City of Colquitt. Our contingency plan is a commercial property that has 76,000 sqft of building space that could be remodeled to house the school.

Our budget will reflect the primary option of the city owned building in Colquitt, GA. We are in negotiations with them now to work out an agreement that will benefit SCCA and the city. The school has one section that was built in 1990 that is structurally sound and only needs minor repairs. This section is large enough for us to house K-5 classes. There are also several structures on the property in which we will eventually be able to house our middle school and cafeteria. However, they will need a complete remodel to be ready for occupancy. The city plans to do this over the next few years with a grant they are receiving from the GA Department of Community Affairs. We would have a total of 11 acres for our school campus between the city owned property and the adjacent land that we would purchase once the school was approved. This would be more than enough room to install modular units as needed for common spaces, dining room seating, and additional classrooms while the other renovations are being made.

We understand that these two options may not work, and are therefore continuing to work on other contingency plans. We have three realtors currently looking for more options in both Miller and Decatur counties, and have engaged interested parents in the search as well. Therefore, we feel confident that if the DOE Facilities Division deems either or both of these properties unsuitable, we can secure another option. Since the governing board just completed a new construction for PCA, they feel confident in ensuring the facility for SCCA is in compliance with every environmental, architectural, and safety rule.

Pataula Charter Academy Inc will loan SCCA funds to help finance renovations and facility start-up. These funds will be repaid before the end of their first charter term.

## Community Engagement

*Prior to opening a new school, there must be evidence of need as demonstrated by the local community that the school hopes to serve. Applicants must complete the chart below to demonstrate that they have secured the requisite community support.*

Type of Engagement/ Support	Frequency	Notes
Community Meetings	# of meetings held: 3 # of total attendees: 212	We held one initial community meeting in each county the school proposed to serve. We will use contacts from these meetings to help reach out to the community and hold smaller more intimate meetings; specifically focusing on outreach to minority communities.
Community Surveys	# of surveys completed: 69 # of surveys indicating support: 69	
Pre-Registration	# of students pre-registered: 101	
Waitlists at Existing School	# of grades served: 13 # of grades with waitlists: 11 # of students on waitlists: 110	
Facebook group	# of group members: 262	
Meetings with local Superintendents	# of meetings: 2	

## Responsibilities of an LEA

*To be completed by Locally-Approved Schools ONLY: In fewer than 350 words, describe how the charter school intends to fulfill all responsibilities of acting as its own LEA, including but not limited to data collection and reporting and serving special populations.*

Not Applicable – Pataula Charter Academy is not a locally-approved charter school.