

**Georgia College & Career Academies**  
**Quarterly Report *Empower College and Career Center***

**Due: March 31, June 30, Sept 30 and Dec 15**

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**Mission and Goals**

Mission of Empower College and Career Center: Empowering learners for success in an ever-changing world.

Vision of Empower College and Career Center: Prepare all students for success by providing personalized pathways to higher education and career opportunities.

Goals:

- Organizational Goal 1: Increase the partnerships among postsecondary institutions, local business/industry, government, and community organizations.
- Organizational Goal 2: Increase the parent, faculty, and staff awareness and engagement in the Empower College and Career Center.
- Organizational Goal 3: Create a continuum of Work-Based Learning (WBL) job shadowing, internships, apprenticeships, and/or capstone experiences to enhance career path opportunities for Empower College and Career Center students.
- Academic Goal 1: From a baseline in Year One (2020-21), increase student literacy competencies.
- Academic Goal 2: From a baseline in Year One (2020-21), increase student numeracy competencies.
- Academic Goal 3: From a baseline in Year One (2020-21), empower learners for success toward academic and career related instruction that allows students to complete pathways and prepare them for high-wage, high-demand careers in an ever changing world.

**Need**

We are still functioning off the initial needs assessment and feel that it is still relevant to the work of Empower. However, we are exploring our options of doing a follow-up study to determine if there are any gaps in the original assessment.

**Partnerships**

We are continuing to build major partnerships with local and regional business and industry. One particular partnership with SK Innovation will bring multiple opportunities for partnering in advanced manufacturing and industrial maintenance.

**Budget**

The \$110,000 start-up expenses are being utilized for supplies, marketing materials, equipment, and travel, as well as to supplement the JCSS commitment to the CEO's salary. The \$3,000,000 will be utilized in the first phase of renovation for the Empower facility. In addition to these funds, there are available ESPOLST funds to assist with phase 1 construction. These funds will be somewhere between \$4 and \$7 million dollars. The overall renovation of the facility is expected to be around \$20 million dollars and the Board of

Directors will spearhead raising the additional funds. These renovations will take place in subsequent years.

### **Governance & Leadership**

Yes...the Board of Directors is up and running and has been since January, 2019. We meet on a monthly basis. The members of the team are:

- April Sorrow, Chair – Jackson EMC
- Dr. Howard Ledford, Vice Chair – Lanier Technical College
- Kathy Lindberg – Wilco Printing
- Kathy Wilbanks – AGM Real Estate
- Jim Shaw – Chamber of Commerce
- Dan Ferris – Kubota International
- Chad Bingham – Bingham Insurance Group
- April Howard – Superintendent of JCSS
- Tricia Massey – Piedmont Athens Regional
- Dr. Carol Adams – University of North Georgia
- Ali Merk - Parent

### **Timelines**

- October – December 2019      Meet with Architects, Board of Directors, and advisory committees to develop a master plan for the Empower Campus, establish curriculum standards, and establish a capital fundraising campaign and marketing program.
- January – April 2020      Establish standards for student experience, enrollment procedures, transportation needs, course offerings (including core academic), dual enrollment offerings, and all other components of the academic program. Also begin capital fundraising campaign.
- April – August 2020      Provide professional development for school system staff members and other educational professionals.
- August – December 2020      Communicate with students and parents about the opportunities available to students and begin the recruit process for the 2021-22 school year.
- January – March 2021      Begin renovation of facility and registration of students for the fall opening of Empower.
- July 25, 2021      Complete phase 1 of renovations and host opening of Empower.

## **Career & College Focus**

The purpose of Empower is to provide a plethora of career and college opportunities for students. The student experience will focus on experiential/expeditionary learning with an emphasis on design thinking and problem solving. There will be an entrepreneurial mindset that will push for multiple school-based enterprises, service learning, expanded work-based learning, and capstone project experiences. In addition, partnerships with Lanier Technical College and the University of North Georgia will allow student the opportunity to increase stackable credentials and get a head start on postsecondary education. In particular, the partnership with Lanier Tech will allow students to take their individual career pathways and end-of-pathway credentials and add TCC's, diplomas, and even associate degrees in their areas of interest and study. Students are continually asking for more than 3 courses in their pathways and dual enrollment with Lanier Tech will provide these opportunities.

## **Grade Levels**

July 30, 2021 is the expected start date for the Empower College and Career Center and will serve students in grades 9-12.

## **Enrollment & Student Focus**

We are currently working on the process for enrollment and will report the process in the following reports. Please be aware that most of the existing upper level Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education programs will be moved to Empower to insure all students across the county have equal access to high quality programs so the enrollment process will be relatively easy for students. In addition, the phased in process for the specialized CTAE programs will follow the timeline in the grant. It may be an accelerated timeline driven on the ability of the Board of Directors to raise additional funds for renovation but the official timeline is still to be determined.

## **Student Support**

As we plan for the overall student experience, student support discussions run parallel to this design process. We will be serving students from all walks of life and must make sure that they have the supports and scaffolding in place to be successful. These supports include improving on the overall advisement process for all Jackson County students to ensure they are aware of the opportunities available to them through the secondary educational experience and beyond. It also includes a solid MTSS/pyramid of interventions program and monitoring expectations to make sure students stay on track to reach their goals and aspirations. This support also involves very engaging extra and intra-curricular opportunities, college and career placement services, and special programs designed to support students with disabilities so that they can live as independent as possible upon their graduation from school.

## **Standards & Curriculum**

Advisory committees are currently being established and will begin meeting in October as we develop the re-design and remodel for the facility where Empower will be located. These committees will re-start discussions on the curriculum as well as help establish the footprint for the laboratory space, design, and equipment needs. Advisory committees will always be the foundation for a transformational experience at Empower!

### **Structure**

Through the development of Empower, we are developing the student experience, student expectations, supports, dual enrollment, bell schedule, etc. These decisions will define the overall school culture for the students.

### **Faculty & Staff**

We are in the process of establishing a bell schedule and how Empower will function in partnership with the partner schools. The COO will more than likely not be hired until January of 2021. Teachers and staffing will be decided on during that spring based upon enrollment.

### **Evaluation**

N/A

### **Cycle of Improvement**

We are not ready to respond to this yet. We are in the process of building the program and will not open until approximately July 30, 2021. Upon that time, there will be a cycle of improvement identified.

### **Charter School Law**

N/A