

March 31, 2008

Mr. Andrew Broy, Director  
Charter School Division  
Georgia Department of Education  
2053 Twin Towers East  
Atlanta, GA 30334

Mr. Broy:

It is the intention of the Hall County Board of Education to open a Schoolwide Enrichment Model Academy in August 2009. This school will be a Conversion Charter. The charter petition will be sent to your office by the required deadline of May 1<sup>st</sup>. The school will be K-5 elementary school which will offer authentic learning opportunities to meet the needs of our diverse student population.

The Schoolwide Enrichment Model is (SEM) (Renzulli, 1977; Renzulli & Reis, 1985, 1997) is widely implemented enrichment program using talent development experiences. The SEM provides enriched learning experiences and higher learning standards for all children through three goals; developing talents in all children, providing a broad range of advanced-level enrichment experiences for all students, and follow-up advanced learning for children based on interests. It is based on Renzulli's Enrichment Triad Model which includes three sequential steps or types. Type I enrichment is designed to expose students to general exploratory activities that are authentic and project-based. The purpose of Type II enrichment is to promote and teach thinking and processing skills through small group instruction. Type III enrichment allows students to pursue a self-directed problem. Students become producers of knowledge not just consumers.

There are two underlying factors for opening this school. First a large percent of our students meet or exceeded expectations on state testing. For example, 83.1% in grade three through five met and/or exceeded in reading/language arts on the 2007 CRCT while 80.3% met and/or exceeded in math. However, our subgroups, Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners and Economically Disadvantaged scored significantly below state expectations. Beginning with the youngest students, Schoolwide Enrichment Model will provide a research-based plan to address specific student needs. Second, Hall County's student population is 32% Hispanic, one of the largest second-language populations in Georgia. The Hispanic population at Sardis is

22 %. Ninety seven students presently receive English as a Second language Services. There is a growing need to have bilingual instruction and instructors in the primary grades in order for students to achieve in reading and English language arts.

Sardis Elementary School will submit a grant application in order to conduct further planning and research regarding the Schoolwide Enrichment Model. The charter petition will convert Sardis Elementary School to Sardis Schoolwide Enrichment Model Academy in August 2009. The new school will draw enrollment from the present community as well as those students that are home schooled within the community.

We are asking for your support of this petition, and we thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Janet E. Hughes

# Start-Up Charter Petition Cover Pages

## Part I. Charter School Information

Check one:             New Petition                             Renewal Petition

This charter school petition is being submitted by a (check one):

Private Individual(s)

Private Organization

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Organization

State Public Entity

Hall County School District

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Entity

Local Public Entity

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Entity

**Name of Proposed Charter School** Sardis Schoolwide Enrichment Model  
Academy

**Local School System in which Charter School will be Located** Hall County Schools

**School address** 711 Green Street Gainesville, Georgia 30501

**Contact person** Janet E. Hughes Principal  
Name Title

**Contact address** 2805 Sardis Road Gainesville, Georgia 30505

**Telephone number of contact** 770-532-0104



## Part II. Assurances and Signatures

1. This charter petition was approved by the \_\_\_\_\_  
Board of Education on \_\_\_\_\_.  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Local Board of Education Date

2. Petitioner(s) assure(s) that the proposed charter school 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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Charter Petitioner Date

## **Part III. Executive Summary**

### **Basic Information**

**Charter School Name:** Sardis Schoolwide Enrichment Model Academy

**Type:** Conversion

Approved by the \_\_\_\_\_ Board of Education on \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Mission**

It is the mission of the Sardis Schoolwide Enrichment Model Academy to offer students at the very earliest stages of public school opportunities to become readers and problem solvers by engaging them in authentic learning experiences that serve the surrounding community in order to improve achievement.

### **Academic Program**

The academic program of the school will include all requirements of the Georgia Performance Standards including the subjects of reading, English language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, health, and physical education. It will also include a program for enrichment studies and Type I, II and III activities as well as the study of Spanish primary grades K-1. The Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) is predicated on the following research: (See attached)

- The Schoolwide Enrichment Model has demonstrated effectiveness in schools with widely differing socioeconomic levels and program organization patterns. It has been adopted in over 2500 schools across the country, and programs using this approach have been widely implemented internationally.
- The effectiveness of the model has been studied in over 20 years of research and field-testing.
- The use of SEM with culturally diverse or special needs populations such as English Language Learners and Special Education students.
- Curriculum compacting is part of SEM which allows teachers to assess students early to eliminate redundant curriculum. Students are able to move forward beyond grade level expectations when they are ready.
- The SEM can be applied to various content areas serving a wide variety of populations from high achieving students to those with special needs and well as those who underachieve.
- The study of Spanish within the SEM is essential to bridging the gap between cultures as well.

## **Organization**

Students will be taught using the SEM (Schoolwide Enrichment Model) at designated times of each day to be determined by teachers based on student needs. An enrichment laboratory will be implemented as part of the academic support rotation such as art, music, physical education, and computer laboratory as well. Students will work on community-based authentic projects with an enrichment specialist. This teacher will be a certified teacher with gifted endorsement. In addition, primary (K-1) students will participate in Spanish language study as part of the academic support rotation.

Instruction will be based on the SEM and Authentic Intellectual work (Fred Newmann); therefore the instruction will be based on hands-on, community-based activities and projects. The Sardis Schoolwide Enrichment Model Academy will become a continuous progress school. Students will be allowed to progress at their own rate, moving beyond grade level constraints according to interest, readiness, ability, and learning style.

The school will be part of the Hall County School District operated by a local governing board. It will not be managed by an outside agency.

Community input will be encouraged. Many student projects will be created based on community needs and concerns.

Students will be taught the importance of teamwork as valued community members. Cultural diversity will be celebrated, studied and shared throughout the SEM curriculum model. Sardis presently works with many pre-service teachers and high school students as a training site for future educators. This will continue to expand as we move forward with the Schoolwide Enrichment Model.

## **Research That Supports Using the Schoolwide Enrichment Model and Extensions of Gifted Education Pedagogy to Meet the Needs of All Students**

### **Background Information**

The Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) (Renzulli, 1977; Renzulli & Reis, 1985, 1997) is widely implemented as an enrichment program used with academically gifted and talented students and a magnet theme school for all students using talent development experiences. The SEM provides enriched learning experiences and higher learning standards for all children through three goals; developing talents in all children, providing a broad range of advanced-level enrichment experiences for all students, and follow-up advanced learning for children based on interests. The SEM emphasizes engagement and the use of enjoyable and challenging learning experiences that are constructed around students' interests, learning styles, and product styles.

Separate studies on the SEM have demonstrated its effectiveness in schools with widely differing socioeconomic levels and program organization patterns (Olenchak, 1988; Olenchak & Renzulli, 1989). The SEM has been adopted in over 2500 schools across the country (Burns, 1998) and programs using this approach have been widely implemented internationally. The effectiveness of the model has been studied in over 20 years of research and field-testing about (a) the effectiveness of the model as perceived by key groups, such as principals (Cooper, 1983; Olenchak, 1988); (b) research related to student creative productivity (Burns, 1987; Delcourt, 1988; Gubbins, 1982; Newman, 1991; Reis, 1981; Starko, 1986); (c) research related to personal and social development (Olenchak, 1991); (d) the use of SEM with culturally diverse or special needs populations (Baum, 1985, 1988; Baum, Renzulli, & Hébert, 1999; Emerick, 1988; Taylor, 1992) (e) research on student self-efficacy (Schack, 1986; Schack, Starko, & Burns, 1991; Starko, 1986), (f) the use of SEM as a curricular framework (Karafelis, 1986; Reis, Gentry, & Park, 1995; Reis, 2006); (g) research relating to learning styles and curriculum compacting (Imbeau, 1991; Reis et al., 1993) and (h) longitudinal research on the SEM (Delcourt, 1988; Hébert, 1993; Westberg, 2000).

This research on the SEM suggests that the model is effective at serving high-ability students in a variety of educational settings and in schools serving diverse ethnic and socioeconomic populations. These studies also suggest that the pedagogy of the SEM can be applied to various content areas resulting in higher achievement when implemented in a wide variety of settings, and used with diverse populations of students including high ability students with learning disabilities and those who underachieve. A comprehensive list of studies on the SEM that extend the use of gifted education pedagogy to all students is included in the Table 1.

### **Studies on Curriculum Compacting and Differentiated Instruction**

Specific studies that investigated achievement include a study on curriculum compacting that found that when teachers eliminated as much as 50% of the regular curriculum for gifted students, they scored as well or better in the out-of-level post achievement tests, using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, ITBS. For example, students whose curriculum was eliminated in science scored significantly higher science achievement tests than did the control group whose curriculum was not compacted. Students whose curriculum was compacted in mathematics scored significantly higher in the math concepts Iowa subtest than did control group students whose curriculum was not compacted in mathematics.

In another recent study, the Schoolwide Enrichment Model in Reading (SEM-R) and Renzulli Learning (Reis, et al., 2005; 2007) was used to investigate the effects of an enrichment approach to reading on elementary school students' reading achievement and attitudes toward reading. Researchers found that when they eliminated 5 hours of regular grouped reading instruction and replaced it with short conferences and enriched reading based on interests, significant differences were found in reading fluency and attitudes toward reading.

### **Studies on Underachievement and Social Emotional Development**

In another study by Baum, Hébert, and Renzulli, (1999), teachers guided seventeen gifted underachieving students (ages 8-13) in the completion of creative products based on their interests as part of the SEM. Positive gains were made by 82% of the students who were no longer underachieving in their school setting at the end of the intervention.

### **Studies on Extending Gifted Education Pedagogy to Meet the Needs of All Students**

Reis, Gentry, and Maxfield (1998) investigated the impact of providing one type of gifted education pedagogy, enrichment clusters, to the entire population of two urban elementary schools. Enrichment clusters provided a regularly scheduled weekly time for students to work with adult facilitators to complete a product or provide service in a shared interest area. Teaching practices of classroom teachers who participated as cluster facilitators were affected both in the enrichment clusters and in regular classrooms. More challenging content was integrated into 95% of the clusters through teaching specific authentic methodologies, advanced thinking, and problem solving strategies. Starko (1986) found that students involved in SEM enrichment group reported over twice as many creative projects per student as those in a comparison group and that they showed greater diversity and sophistication in projects.

### **Studies on Using Gifted Education Pedagogy to Nurture Mathematical Talent**

In a recent study (Gavin, Casa, & Adelson, 2006; Gavin & Adelson, in press; Gavin, Casa, Adelson, Carroll, Sheffield, & Spinelli, in press), math achievement was investigated using Project M<sup>3</sup>: Mentoring Mathematical Minds curriculum units. These units were created specifically to provide high-end learning with challenging and motivational investigations for talented math students in grades 3, 4, and 5. Researchers found that two cohorts of students made consistently significant gains on achievement in

math concepts, computation and problem solving on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills each year over a 3-year period. Both cohorts of students using the curriculum also outperformed a comparison group of students of like ability from the same schools. There were also highly significant gains on challenging open-ended problems adapted from international and national assessments in favor of students using the Project M<sup>3</sup> curriculum over the comparison group.

### **Studies on Renzulli Learning**

In a recent study, Field (2007) used quantitative research procedures in this empirical study to investigate the use of Renzulli Learning on oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, science achievement, and social studies achievement. Students were involved in the study from two schools, an urban middle school where nearly half of all students are considered to be at risk due to poverty or other factors, and a suburban elementary school in a middle class neighborhood. Classes of students in grades 3 – 5 ( $n = 185$ ) and grades 6 – 8 ( $n = 198$ ) were randomly assigned to use Renzulli Learning for 2-3 hours each week for a 16-week period. Scores of students in the treatment groups were compared to those of students who did not have the opportunity to use Renzulli Learning in control classes in the same schools. After only 16 weeks, students who participated in Renzulli Learning demonstrated significantly higher growth in reading comprehension, oral reading fluency, and social studies achievement than students who did not participate in Renzulli Learning.

Table 1. Research Summary of Studies Related to SEM and Renzulli Learning

Topic Author & Date	Title of Study	Sample	Research Findings
<b>Student Creative Productivity</b>			
Gubbins, 1982	Revolving Door Identification Model: Characteristics of talent pool students	E N=776	Academic self-concept predicted student involvement with product development; students who did not generate self-selected projects (Type IIIs) attributed the lack of product development to time management problems and difficulty in generating product ideas
Reis, 1981	An analysis of the productivity of gifted students participating in programs using the Revolving Door Identification Model	E N=1,280	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students in the expanded talent pool (5-20%) produced products of equal quality as compared to students in the top 3-5% of the population.</li> </ul>
Schack, 1986	Creative productivity and self-efficacy in children	E, M N=294	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-efficacy was a significant predictor of initiation of an independent investigation, and self-efficacy at the end of treatment was higher in students who participated in Type III projects.</li> </ul>
Starko, 1986	The effects of The Revolving Door Identification Model on creative productivity and self-efficacy	E N=103	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students who became involved with self-selected independent studies in SEM programs initiated their own creative products both inside and outside school more often than students who qualified for the program but did not receive services.</li> <li>• Students in the enrichment group reported over twice as many creative projects per student (3.37) as the comparison group (.50) and showed greater diversity and sophistication in projects.</li> <li>• The number of creative products completed in school (Type IIIs) was a highly significant predictor of self-efficacy.</li> </ul>
Burns, 1987	The effects of group training activities on students' creative productivity	E N=515	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students receiving process skill training were 64% more likely to initiate self-selected projects (Type IIIs) than the students who did not receive the training.</li> </ul>
Baum, 1988	An enrichment program for gifted learning disabled students	E N=7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Type III study, used as an intervention with high ability, learning disabled students, improved students' behavior, specifically the ability to self-regulate time on task; improvement in self-esteem; and the development of specific instructional strategies to enhance the potential of high potential, learning disabled students.</li> </ul>
Newman, 1991	The effects of the Talents Unlimited Model on students' creative	E N=147	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students with training in the Talents Unlimited Model were more likely to complete independent investigations (Type IIIs) than the students who did not receive the training.</li> </ul>

	productivity		
Hébert, 1993	Reflections at graduation: The long-term impact of elementary school experiences in creative productivity	S N=9 (longitudinal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five major findings: Type III interests of students affect post-secondary plans; creative outlets are needed in high school; a decrease in creative Type III productivity occurs during the junior high experience; the Type III process serves as important training for later productivity; non-intellectual characteristics with students remain consistent over time.</li> </ul>
Delcourt, 1993	Creative productivity among secondary school students: Combining energy, interest, and imagination	S N=18 (longitudinal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students participating in Type III projects, both in and out of school, maintained interests and career aspirations in college.</li> <li>• Supports the concept that adolescents and young adults can be producers of information, as well as consumers.</li> </ul> <p>Student giftedness, as manifested in performances and product development, may be predicted by high levels of creative/productive behaviors at an early age.</p>
Westberg, 2004	A Longitudinal Study of Students who Participated in a Program based on the Enrichment Triad Model in 1981-1984	E, S N=15 (longitudinal)	Students maintained interests over time and were still involved in creative productive work
<b>Special Populations and Affective Issues</b>			
Baum, 1985	Learning disabled students with superior cognitive abilities: A validation study of descriptive behaviors	E N=112	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEM recommended as one vehicle to meet the unique needs of gifted students with learning disabilities because of the emphasis on strengths, interests, and learning styles.</li> </ul>
Baum, Hébert, & Renzulli, 1999	Students who underachieve	E, M N=17	Reversal of underachievement through the use of SEM Type III projects
Emerick, 1988	Academic underachievement among the gifted: Students' perceptions of factors relating to the reversal of academic underachievement patterns	H+ N=10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reversal of academic underachievement through use of various components of SEM including: curriculum compacting, exposure to Type I experiences, opportunities to be involved in Type III studies, and an appropriate assessment of learning styles to provide a match between students and teachers.</li> </ul> <p>To reverse the academic underachievement in gifted students, the following factors must be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• out-of-school interests</li> <li>• parents</li> <li>• goals associated with academic performance</li> <li>• classroom instruction and curriculum</li> <li>• the teacher</li> <li>• changes in the self</li> </ul>

Olenchak, 1991	Assessing program effects for gifted/learning disabled students	P, E N=108	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported use of SEM as a means of meeting educational needs of a wide variety of high ability students.</li> <li>SEM, when used as an intervention, was associated with improved attitudes toward learning among elementary, high ability students with learning disabilities. Furthermore, the same students, who completed a high percentage of Type III projects, made positive gains with respect to self-concept.</li> </ul>
Taylor, 1992	The effects of the Secondary Enrichment Triad Model on the career development of vocational-technical school students	S N=60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involvement in Type III studies substantially increased post-secondary education plans of students (from attending 2.6 years to attending 4.0 years).</li> </ul>
Heal, 1989	Student perceptions of labeling the gifted: A comparative case study analysis	E N=149	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEM was associated with a reduction in the negative effects of labeling.</li> </ul>
Reis, Schader, & Milne, & Stephens, 2003	Music & minds: Using a talent development approach for young adults with Williams syndrome	S N=16	<p>One third of the participants had high levels of musical talent, and the use of participants' interests and advanced training in music was found to both enhance all participants' understanding of mathematics and to provide opportunities for the further development of their interests and abilities, especially their potential in music. The use of a talent development approach focusing on strengths, interests and style preferences was found to be successful for this group of young persons with Williams Syndrome.</p>
<b>SEM as Applied to School Change</b>			
Olenchak, 1990	School change through gifted education: Effects on elementary students' attitudes toward learning	P, E N=1,935	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive changes in student attitudes toward learning as well as toward gifted education and school in general.</li> </ul>
Olenchak, 1988	The Schoolwide Enrichment Model in elementary schools: A study of implementation stages and effects on educational excellence	P, E N=236 teachers N=1,698 students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEM contributed to improved teachers', parents', and administrators' attitudes toward education for high ability students.</li> </ul>
Cooper, 1983	Administrator's attitudes toward gifted programs based on the	8 districts N=32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrator perceptions regarding the model included: greater staff participation in education of high ability students, more positive staff attitudes toward the program, fewer concerns</li> </ul>

	Enrichment Triad/Revolving Door Identification Model: Case studies in decision-making		about identification, positive changes in how the guidance department worked with students, more incentives for students to work toward higher goals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrators found SEM to have an impact on all students.</li> </ul>
Reis, Gentry, & Maxfield	The application of enrichment clusters to teachers' classroom practices	E 2 schools N=120 teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers trained to use enrichment clusters as part of the enrichment program were able to transfer and implement the use of advanced content and methods in their regular classrooms.</li> <li>Methods used by teachers included: advanced content and methods, advanced vocabulary, authentic tools of the disciplines, advanced references and problem solving.</li> </ul>
<b>Curriculum Modification; Learning and Product Styles</b>			
Imbeau, 1991	Teachers' attitudes toward curriculum compacting with regard to the implementation of the procedure	P, E, M, S N=166	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group membership (peer coaching) was a significant predictor of posttest teachers' attitudes.</li> <li>Comparisons of teachers' attitudes toward curriculum compacting indicate a need for additional research on variables that enhance and inhibit the use of curriculum compacting as a classroom strategy</li> </ul>
Kettle, Renzulli, & Rizza, 1997	Products of mind: Exploring student preferences for product development using My Way...an expression style instrument	E, M N=3,532	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' preferences for creating potential products were explored through the use of an expression style inventory. Factor analytic procedures yielded the following 11 factors: computer, service, dramatization, artistic, audio/visual, written, commercial, oral, manipulative, musical, and vocal.</li> </ul>
Reis, Westberg, Kulikowich, & Purcell, 1998	Curriculum compacting and achievement test scores: What does the research say?	K, E, M N=336	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using curriculum compacting to eliminate between 40%-50% of curricula for students with demonstrated advanced content knowledge and superior ability resulted in no decline in achievement test scores.</li> </ul>
<b>Application of SEM to Curriculum and Content Areas, and Related Achievement Increases</b>			
Karafelis, 1986	The effects of the tri-art drama curriculum on the reading comprehension of students with varying levels of	E, M N=80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students receiving experimental treatment did equally well on achievement tests as the control group.</li> </ul>

	cognitive ability		
Reis, et al. (2005)	The Schoolwide Enrichment Model in Reading	E, M N=1,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Students who participated in an enriched reading program based on SEM had significantly higher scores in reading fluency and reading comprehension than students in the control group.</li> <li>•Students who participated in an enriched reading program based on SEM had significantly higher attitudes toward reading than students in the control group.</li> </ul>
Eleck. 2005	Implementing Renzulli Learning in Enrichment Programs and Classrooms	E, M N=200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Students in enrichment and regular classrooms used Renzulli Learning with minimal training. Almost 50 percent of students had ideas for completing products using Renzulli Learning and 8 % enjoyed using Renzulli Learning completely or very much. Each of the pilot teachers using the system assigned projects to students on-line.</li> </ul>
Field, 2007	An experimental study using Renzulli Learning to investigate reading fluency and comprehension as well as social studies achievement	E, M N=383	After 16 weeks, students who participated in Renzulli Learning for 2-3 hours each week demonstrated significantly higher growth in reading comprehension than students who did not participate in Renzulli Learning ( $p < .001$ ). Students who participated in Renzulli Learning demonstrated significantly higher growth in oral reading fluency ( $p = .016$ ) than those students who did not participate in Renzulli Learning. Students who participated in Renzulli Learning demonstrated significantly higher growth in social studies achievement ( $p = .013$ ) than those students who did not participate in Renzulli Learning.
Gubbins, Housand, Oliver, Schader, & De Wet, 2007	Unclogging the mathematics pipeline through access to algebraic understanding: University of Connecticut site	M 5 teachers 73 students	Grade 6 students identified for an after-school program in algebra using grade 8, norm-referenced achievement and algebra aptitude tests; 30 hour intervention yielded significant pre/post achievement results in problem solving and data interpretation (17-point gain), and algebra tests
Gubbins, et al., 2002	Implementing a professional development model using gifted education strategies with all students	E, M 40 liaisons 235 teachers	Liaisons became local experts in modifying, differentiating, and enriching curriculum; teachers raised expectations for students' work; teachers recognized the need to provide challenging academic options

\*P=Primary grades, K-2; E=Elementary grades, 3-5; M=Middle grades, 6-8; S, H=Secondary or High School grades, 9-12.

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