



# STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION OF GEORGIA

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## FEBRUARY 2015 NEWSLETTER

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### SCSC Meetings

The State Charter Schools Commission last met on January 28, 2015. The meeting minutes are available [here](#). The next Commission meeting is on Wednesday, February 25, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. in the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Board Room. The 2015 Commission meeting calendar is available [on the SCSC website](#).

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### 2015 Petition Cycle

The application for the 2015 petition cycle is expected to be released on February 25. All applicants should ensure they use the newly released version since it is different than the 2014 version.

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### Recognition of Best Practices

The SCSC would like to highlight the best practices of state charter schools. If your school has implemented a best practice that has led to data-driven student achievement gains, please submit information via email to [lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov](mailto:lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov). SCSC staff will select up to one school per month for inclusion in the newsletter.

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### Training Opportunities

The [2014-2015 SCSC Training Agenda](#) is available on the [Training Opportunities](#) page of the SCSC website. This draft list is intended to assist schools in planning and dates/topics are subject to change. Presentations and materials from SCSC trainings are available on the [Training Presentations and Materials](#) page of the SCSC website.

Please RSVP to [lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov](mailto:lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov) if you wish to attend a training session.

### Charter Schools Financial Management Certification Program

**Introductory Accounting**

**February 25-27, 2015**

**Atlanta, Georgia**

**Invited: School Business Managers and Administrators**

The SCSC will offer a full scholarship to state charter business managers and/or administrators who wish to enroll in the Carl Vinson Institute of Government's Charter Schools Financial Management Certification Program. Courses must be completed within a three-year period. The Introductory Accounting course will introduce participants to basic accounting concepts for governmental funds. Topics covered include – accounting equation, chart of accounts, double entry

accounting, accounting systems and records, fund accounting, basis of accounting, payroll and benefit accounting, and case study. Visit the SCSC website to see the full [program overview](#).

### **Budgeting and Purchasing for Charter Schools**

**May 6-7, 2015**

**Atlanta, Georgia**

**Invited: School Business Managers and Administrators**

This course is part of the CVIQG Financial Management Certification and will focus on roles of the board and staff in budgeting, budget preparation process, estimating revenues and expenditures, projection of ending fund balance, and justification of budget to funding authorities and board. Budget administration, long term financial planning, and the Quality Basic Education funding formula will also be discussed. The Purchasing course will focus on topics important to the purchasing process, from determining needs to receipt of purchased goods and services. Also discussed are alternative purchasing methods, required documentation, and ethics. Visit the SCSC website to see the full [program overview](#).

*To attend a training session or for more information, contact Lauren Holcomb, SCSC Director of Organizational and Resource Development, at [lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov](mailto:lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov) or (404) 656-2822.*

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## **Reporting Deadlines**

The following reporting items are due in February and March:

- **TKES/LKES Survey Window Closes**
- **SLO Statements Visible in the Platform**
- **Data Collections:** Pre-ID, Student Record, CPI, FTE, Student Class-Class Size

The [FY15 Reporting Calendar](#) is available on the SCSC website. For help accessing the GaDOE portal and with any application functionality issues, please contact the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) Information Systems Customer Support Center at 1-800-869-1011 or [dticket@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dticket@doe.k12.ga.us).

*Please direct questions about reporting items to Terence Washington, SCSC Finance and Operational Accountability Manager, at [terence.washington@scsc.georgia.gov](mailto:terence.washington@scsc.georgia.gov) or (404) 656-2837.*

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## **Student Information Systems**

All charter schools authorized by the SCSC should utilize student information systems (SIS) that are compatible with Georgia's Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). Schools authorized by the SCSC after April 2013 are required to utilize an SIS that is compatible with the SLDS as a condition of their charter contracts. There are many vendors that offer SIS products that are compatible with the SLDS. All vendors currently used by local school districts are compatible with the SLDS. A map illustrating the vendors used by local school districts is available [here](#). Other vendors may be compatible. If you are unsure whether an SIS product is compatible, please contact the Georgia Department of Education's Technology Services Division [here](#).

State charter schools are also encouraged to utilize SIS products that are compatible with the Georgia Online IEP program (GO-IEP) offered through the Georgia Department of Education. This access will help schools with special education compliance. Systems known to be compatible with GO-IEP are: Infinite Campus, Powerschool, Schoolmax, and Aspen. Additional systems may be compatible. Please contact the Georgia Department of Education's Division for Special Education Services and Supports [here](#) for more information.

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## **Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Exemption:**

As you may be aware, USDA Memo SP 19-2015 **extends the availability for exemption from the Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) requirement through FY 2015-2016 & FY 2016-2017** for School Food Authorities (SFAs) in strong financial standing and six cents certified. In order to be exempted, SFAs are required to submit a request for exemption and certain records to the State Agency for evaluation. A request for exemption will be granted if the SFA is six cents certified and can demonstrate that the required increase to paid lunch prices or revenue contributions will cause the SFA to exceed the 3 month average operating balance limit.

To enable the State Agency (SA) to evaluate and approve your request for exemption, please submit your request to Vanessa Haigler at: [vhaigler@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:vhaigler@doe.k12.ga.us) **on or before May 31, 2015**. Also, attach any other records that may be helpful in justifying the decision for an exemption. You may scan and email the completed form and records.

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## **GaDOE Facilities Division Bond and Construction Questionnaires**

The GaDOE Facilities Services Unit recently sent an email to district superintendents regarding Bond and Construction Questionnaires. As state charter school do not participate in the capital outlay program, state charters are NOT required to complete the questionnaires.

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## **GaDOE Student Learning Objectives State Exemplars**

The SLO team is requesting feedback regarding the State Exemplars. Please submit any suggestions or identified revisions using the link below by Friday, March 20, 2015. District feedback is critical to ensure appropriate vetting of the assessments. An additional level of review is also being conducted by Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL), an external education research group. The recommendations from districts and SEDL will guide the refinement of the exemplars and corrections will be completed prior to July 2015. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1FXGiz2rbE4wheSv4YUm0R7iu3B3WCKy2bWnw56OSUN8/viewform>

*Please direct questions to Michele Purvis, GaDOE Program Manager and Evaluation System Specialist, at 404-232-1537 or [mpurvis@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:mpurvis@doe.k12.ga.us).*

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## **Food Recall**

Please be advised that Goya Foods, Inc. has recalled certain lots of Kirby brand black beans with creole seasoning, 29 oz. size and Goya brand black bean soup, 29 oz. size. The voluntary recall was announced after the Company was notified by one of its ingredient suppliers that one lot of ground cumin had potentially been produced with undeclared peanut protein. Find detailed information about this recall [here](#).

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## [SCSC Releases Charter School Lottery Guidance](#)

Just in time for the upcoming enrollment season, SCSC staff released guidance describing the best practices for conducting charter school student enrollment lotteries. The guidance explains important requirements of law, rules, and SCSC expectations. Moreover, the guidance discusses how to conduct a student enrollment lottery, using enrollment priorities, maintaining wait lists, and student enrollment after the lottery. The guidance is available on the SCSC website [here](#).

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## [State Charter Collaborative Communities](#)

The GaDOE has created a schedule of Collaborative Communities for state charter schools in the 2014-15 school year focused on special education. The information presented will assist schools in the five focus areas for implementation of IDEA: the Identification Process, Services and Supports, Student Progress, Parent Engagement, and College and Career Readiness. **Two attendees** may participate from each school. Register at [www.mresa.org](http://www.mresa.org) or contact Raylicia Davis at [raylicia.davis@mresa.org](mailto:raylicia.davis@mresa.org) with questions.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	PARKING
5/6/15	10:00 - 2:00	Chick-Fil-A	5200 Buffington Road Atlanta, Georgia
			No Parking Fee

**Chick-fil-A will provide a complimentary Continental Breakfast and Lunch each day.**

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## [Funding and Professional Development Opportunities](#)

SCSC staff have identified the following grant and professional development opportunities that may be of benefit to state charters. A list of SCSC-identified ongoing grant opportunities is available [here](#).

### **Project Based Instruction Summit Georgia Charter Schools Association**

Charter schools are required to be innovators and think tanks to help lead school reform, but they don't have to reinvent the wheel. Join experienced public school educators and leaders (from the charter and public sector) as they share what they have learned about the ins and outs of running authentic, inspiring and successful project-based schools. Presenters will lead sessions on school culture, integrated thematic units and assessment. GCSA will also have presentations on school reform models such as Expeditionary Learning, Museum Model, and Critical Friends Groups. Attendees will have the opportunity to observe project-based learning in action if they decide to tour the school. Georgia's 2014 Charter School of the Year, Brighten Academy Charter School, is the proud host of this event taking place on February 27, 2015. To register go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/project-based-instruction-summit-registration-11226535871>.

### **2015 Atlanta Area Charter Schools Job Fair Georgia Charter Schools Association**

The 2015 GCSA Charter Schools Job Fair will take place on Saturday, March 7, 2015, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm at International Academy of Smyrna, 2144 South Cobb Drive in Smyrna. The Job Fair provides job seekers and schools seeking staff to meet face-to-face. Each registered charter school will receive a spreadsheet of the applicants planning to attend the job

fair. Schools can then select and filter candidates based on their most important criteria. After meeting potential candidates, applicant resumes are available in a Dropbox database.

#### REGISTRATION INFORMATION

For applicants: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KFJYZFZ>

For schools: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/828SHT8>

Please contact Rena Youngblood at [ryoungblood@gacharters.org](mailto:ryoungblood@gacharters.org) if you have any questions. Space is limited so register early.

#### **CharterLeader Program**

#### **Georgia Charter Schools Association**

The Georgia Charter Schools Association's (GCSA) CharterLeader program is launching a new cohort, beginning in February 2015 and running through June 2015. The program equips current and aspiring leaders in charter schools to develop the skills and core competencies to launch, lead, convert, replicate, and/or expand high quality schools. The CharterLeader training is an opportunity to receive 10 Professional Learning Units (PLUs).

The total program cost is \$3,000. Participants or schools will be required to pay in two installments of \$1,500 in both February and May, 2015 before being issued a completion certificate. Applications for the 2015 cohort are due by Friday, February 6, 2015.

For further information contact Waynica Staples, Director of Leadership Development & Training, at [wstaples@gacharters.org](mailto:wstaples@gacharters.org) or 404-835-8914. All applicants must also [complete this survey](#).

#### **DonorsChoose.org**

#### **Online Fundraising Drive**

DonorsChoose.org is an online charity that makes it easy for donors to find meaningful projects to support. Public school teachers from every corner of America post classroom project requests on the website site, and donors can give any amount to the project that most inspires them. Schools can register their own projects at [www.donorschoose.org](http://www.donorschoose.org).

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