

Comprehensive Performance Framework *2018-19 Updates and Amendments*



SCSC Mission

The mission of the State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia is to improve public education throughout the state by approving high quality charter schools that provide students with *better* educational opportunities than they would otherwise be afforded in traditional schools.

Overview

In 2016, the SCSC adopted a Comprehensive Performance Framework (CPF) to set forth clear, quantifiable, rigorous, and attainable goals for state charter schools.

The three areas of performance covered by the framework—**academic achievement**, **financial management**, and **operational compliance**— correspond directly with the three components of a strong charter school.

In each of the three areas, the framework asks a fundamental question:

1. Academic Performance: Is the educational program offering students a **better educational opportunity** than they would otherwise receive in the traditional district schools to which they are zoned?
2. Financial Performance: Is the school **financially viable**?
3. Operational Performance: Is the organization **effective, compliant, and well-run**?

Overview

The SCSC annually reviews the CPF to ensure that the metrics accurately depict a school's performance and answer the fundamental question for each section. As SCSC staff considers changes to the CPF, we conduct research, solicit feedback from school leaders, and receive input from GaDOE Charter Division.

Specific priorities for the 2019 updates and amendments are:

- 1. Reflecting the SCSC mission and values;*
- 2. Increasing public understanding of school performance; and*
- 3. Capturing regulatory updates while respecting school autonomy.*

Proposed changes include:

- the **removal** of some burdensome, unaligned metrics;
- the reworking of certain metrics to ensure **expectations are clear**;
- the addition of new metrics that provide schools **more opportunities** to demonstrate performance; and
- restructuring and language edits to provide **uniformity** across sections.

Overview

- Following this meeting, SCSC staff will hold a **webinar** to share the proposed changes with school leaders and board members.
- The proposed amendments will be **open for public comment and feedback** for 45 days. SCSC staff will synthesize feedback and prepare final recommendations for Commissioner approval at the **January SCSC meeting**.
- For reporting 2018-19 CPF results, schools scores will be generated using both the old CPF and the updated CPF with the proposed amendments. The **higher score will be used**.

All Sections- Scoring Criteria Updates

Previously:

- A school could be designated as Meets, Does Not Meet or Falls Far Below standards in each section (Academics, Finances and Operations) of the CPF.
- The points associated with each designation varied from section to section.

Updated:

- A school will be designated Meets, Approaches or Does Not Meet standards in each section.
- The points associated with each designation will be **uniform** in the Financial and Operational sections.
- In the Academic section, no points will be used.

All Sections- Scoring Criteria Updates

- The amendment **creates consistency** throughout the CPF. The updated terminology matches the language that is currently used to describe a school's performance on individual measures within each section of the CPF.
- Additionally, providing schools the opportunity to be designated as Approaches standards provides a **more accurate depiction** of performance standings for schools that are very close to meeting standards. This change required that the relative points be updated to more accurately reflect the new category.
- The use of points in the academic section complicated communications with stakeholders. **Academic scores on the CPF are often mistaken for CCRPI scores** (e.g. a score of 0 on the CPF does not mean the school has a CCRPI score of 0). Removing points from the academic section will allow for **clearer, more accurate messaging of school performance**.

All Sections- Scoring Criteria Updates

- Previously:

Scoring Criteria	Academics	Financial	Operational
Meets Standard	70-100	75-100	80-100
Does Not Meet Standard	50-69	50-74	50-79
Falls Far Below Standard	0-49	0-49	0-49

- Updated:

Scoring Criteria	Academics	Financial and Ops
Meets Standard	Outperforming	80-100
Approaches Standard	Performing As Well As	70-79
Does Not Meet Standard	Under Performing	0-69

Academics- Remove Measure

- Previously: Measure 1 a. Improvement Targets
 - Meets Standard = the school met 100 percent of school improvement targets.
- Previously: Measure 1 b. State Designations
 - Meets Standard = the school is not designated as “CSI”, “TSI” or Turnaround Eligible.
- Updated: Remove Measures

Academics- Remove Measure

- Both measures are worth two points. The small point allocation means whether a school meets on the measure or not plays no role in determining if the school will or will not meet standards overall in the academic section.
- The measures do not align with the SCSC's mission of assessing whether the school is providing a better educational opportunity than what is being provided by the traditional school district.

Academics- Other Updates

- Previously: Measures were grouped as “First Look” and “Second Look”
- Updated: Each measure stands on its own

The previous grouping does not align with SCSC messaging that all academic measures are weighted equally in the CPF. The SCSC values a school that outperforms the district on the VAM just as much as a school that outperforms on CCRPI Content Mastery.

Academics- Other Updates

- Previously: Grade band VAM scores could not be combined with grade band CCRPI scores to demonstrate performance across all grade bands served.
- Updated: A school can meet academic standards by outperforming the district it serves on **any combination of CCRPI or the VAM measures**.

This change closes a loophole in how the measures were written. It provides schools just one more way to demonstrate performance.

Academics Metrics within the CPF

Schools may satisfy annual academic requirements by:

Outperforming their comparison district(s) in all relevant grade bands on at least one of the following measures:

- **CCRPI Content Mastery,**
- **CCRPI Progress,**
- **CCRPI Grade Band Score,**
- **CCRPI Single Score (weighted by grade band enrollment),**
- **Value-Added Impact on Student Achievement**

OR by earning a “**Beating The Odds**” designation from GaDOE

Financial - Add New Measure

- Previously: A school could earn up to 60 points across four near-term measures in the CPF. There was no metric that assessed whether a school has enough income to cover short-term debt.
- Updated: A school can earn up to 70 points across five near-terms measures, including a **Debt to Income calculation (DTI)**.

Financial- Add New Measure

- The **Debt to Income (DTI) ratio** is used to measure the proportion of a school's income that goes towards debt payments.
- When breaking school expenditures into three general parts (Instruction, Operations, and Debt Service) the SCSC is able to gain a better understanding of the **school's ability to optimize the availability of funds for instruction and operations**. A high DTI is an indicator of relative high risk when compared to similar schools with lower DTI percentages.
- After running impact scenarios using 2017-18 data, the addition of the DTI measure (even with moving the “Meets Standard” threshold to 80, as mentioned earlier), results in **more schools meeting financial expectations**. Thus, it provides another opportunity for schools to demonstrate financial viability.

Financial Metrics within the CPF

Schools may satisfy annual financial requirements by:

Demonstrating adequate performance on the following near-term measures:

- **current ratio**
- **unrestricted days cash**
- **enrollment variance**
- **debt to income ratio**, and
- **default on debt**

AND on the following sustainability measures:

- **efficiency margin**, and
- **debt to asset ratio.**

Financial - Remove Exceeds Standard

- Previously: For measures in the Financial section of the CPF, a school could be designated as Exceeds, Meets, Approaches or Does Not Meet standards.
- Updated: For measures in the Financial section of the CPF, a school can be designated as Meets, Approaches or Does Not Meet standards.

Financial- Remove Exceeds Standard

- The update is meant to **create uniformity** across all sections of the CPF. The Financial section was the only section that included an Exceeds standard.
- This change **does not penalize schools** that were previously exceeding on measures. We treat schools that “meet” and “exceed” in the same manner.
- To accommodate adding the DTI measure, the overall point distribution in the Financial section had to be adjusted. Removing the Exceeds standard option allowed for those points to be **reallocated to the DTI measure**.

Operations Overview

SCSC staff is proposing additional measures in the Operations section to more accurately capture school compliance, and the removal or consolidation of other measures.

These amendments balance the importance of **school compliance** with **charter school autonomy**.

- Combine six measures into three
- Split one measure into two separate measures
- Add five measures
- Remove three measures

Operational- Measures Combined

Six measures are combined into three measures:

- *Essential and Innovative Features and Mission Specific Goals*
- *Data Reporting and Financial Reporting*
- *Employee Qualifications and Criminal Records Checks*

These measures are combined to more appropriately group topics and reduce the chance that schools will lose points in two sections for a similar function.

Operational- Measure Split

One measure is split into two measures:

- *Education Requirements- removed*
- *State Education Requirements- added*
- *Federal Education Requirements- added*

State and federal education requirements and the requisite monitoring that is attached to these requirements are drastically different. Separating out this measure will **allow the SCSC to better measure school compliance** and **clarify to schools how they are held accountable** for these requirements.

Operational- Measures Added

Four measures are added to the Financial Oversight section:

- *Adherence to Federal Financial Requirements*
- *Adherence to the Local Units of Administration Manual*
- *Adherence to the School's Own Financial Policies and Procedures*
- *Budget Approved in Accordance with State Law*

The addition of these measures are meant to **clarify expectations** for schools. Previously, the loss of points on these elements was captured in the Additional Obligations category. By separating these requirements, schools can more adequately take steps to ensure compliance.

Operational- Measures Added

One measure is added to the Governance section:

- *Transparent Governance and Communication with Stakeholders*

This measure is meant to emphasize compliance with SCSC rule regarding information on **school websites and transparent communications**. The new measure encourages governing boards to be as communicative as possible with stakeholders.

Operational- Measures Removed

Three measures are being removed from the Ops section:

- *Holding Management Accountable*
- *Student Retention*
- *Support Services*

Components of these measures are already captured in other areas of the CPF. Thus, in an effort to **remove unnecessary and duplicative regulations**, staff proposes to eliminate these three measures. SCSC staff is mindful to not overly burden schools with new measures without taking away unneeded measures.

Operational- Approaches Standard Added

- Previously: A school could earn all possible points (Meets standards) for Data Reporting if it did not miss any reporting deadlines and would receive zero points (Does Not Meet standards) if it missed any reporting deadlines.
- Updated: A school can earn all possible points (Meeting standards) for Data Reporting if it did not miss any reporting deadlines, **partial points (Approaches standards)** if it missed just one deadline, and zero points (Does Not Meet standards) if it missed more than one deadline.

Operational Metrics within the CPF

Schools may satisfy annual operational requirements by adhering to the requirements of their charter contracts and all applicable rules and laws as measured by:

- the school's **educational program** (adherence to its essential or innovative features and implementation of required programs);
- **financial oversight** (adherence to GAAP standards);
- **governance capacity and transparency**;
- **protecting students and employees** through the appropriate use of compensatory programs and employee qualifications;
- **maintaining a positive school environment** by promoting student retention and support services;

AND any additional obligations including:

- **the timely remediation of previous noncompliance.**

Wrap-Up

- Following this meeting, SCSC staff will hold a **webinar** to share the proposed changes with school leaders.
- The proposed amendments will be **open for public comment and feedback for 45 days**. Staff will synthesize feedback and present a final recommendation prior to the January meeting.
- Written feedback should be submitted to Katie Manthey- katie.manthey@scsc.georgia.gov by **5 p.m. on Monday Dec. 16th**.
- Staff will recommend final amendments for Commissioner adoption at the **January 2020 SCSC meeting**.
- For reporting 2018-19 CPF results, schools scores will be generated using both the old CPF and the updated CPF with the proposed amendments. **The higher score will be used.**

Questions



State Charter School Renewals
*Standards, Application, Process and
Timeline*



SCSC Evaluation Metrics

State charter schools are assessed with a Comprehensive Performance Framework that enables transparent and objective performance evaluations in the following areas: 1) academic achievement, 2) financial health, and 3) operational compliance.

- The academic portion of the CPF incorporates various components of the CCRPI (official state accountability tool) as well as predictive indicators that control for a school's unique and/or challenging student population to determine if the school provides students with a **better educational opportunity**.
- The financial portion of the CPF assesses short-term and long-term measures to measure the school's **financial viability**.
- The organizational portion of the CPF reflects the school's ability to **comply** with all applicable **laws** (state and federal), **rules** and **regulations**.

Renewal Eligibility

STANDARD RENEWAL (5 Years) – ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

A TENURED SCHOOL (i.e. a school concluding a second or subsequent charter term):

- To be eligible for a standard five-year renewal, a school must meet financial, operational and academic standards at least 75% of the time (3 of the first 4 years of a 5-year charter contract term).

A NEW SCHOOL (i.e. a school concluding its first/initial charter term):

- To be eligible for a standard five-year renewal, a school must meet financial and operational standards at least 50% of the time (2 of 4 years) and academic standards at least 75% of the time (3 of the first 4 years of a 5-year charter contract term).

Renewal Eligibility

ABBREVIATED RENEWAL (3 Years) – ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

A TENURED SCHOOL: must A) meet financial and operations standards 75% of the time AND B) perform at least as well as* the district on any one or combination of the CCRPI indicators outlined within the CPF 75% of the time.

A NEW SCHOOL: must A) meet financial and operational standards in Year 4 of the charter term, AND

- B) perform at least as well as* the district on any one or combination of the CCRPI indicators outlined within the CPF 75% of the time, OR
- C) perform at least as well as* the district on any one or combination of the CCRPI indicators in Year 4 of the charter term, OR
- D) outperform the district(s) on VAM or BTO in Year 4 of the charter term.
- Consecutive abbreviated charter terms will NOT be awarded.
- *As well as the district is defined as a score that is no more than 3% below the district(s) score.

Standard vs. Abbreviated Terms

The goal: all schools performing at a level warranting standard five-year renewals.

- The SCSC prefers to award five-year (as opposed to three-year) charter terms; however, a school must demonstrate a consistent track record of strong performance over multiple years to warrant a standard five-year renewal.

The intent of an abbreviated term:

- to reward new schools that “finished strong” (despite early struggles) by meeting standards in Year 4, and
- to give schools that consistently perform on par with the district additional time to demonstrate the ability to outperform.

Important notes:

- An abbreviated term has a singular purpose: to assess a school’s ability to sustain the requisite performance level.
- An abbreviated term is NOT intended to assess the efficacy of a school turnaround effort.
- Charter schools that finish a contract term in need of “school turnaround” are not strong candidates for renewal in any form.

Renewal Timeline

Task	Projected Timeline
Renewal Application Approved	October 30, 2019
Renewal Application Release	November 1, 2019
Interview Scheduling	December 2019
VAM/BTO Released	January 2020
Applications Due	January 6, 2020
Renewal Interviews	January 27-31, 2020
Recommendation Letters Mailed	February 12, 2020
Recommendations Posted	February 19, 2020
Commission Votes on Recommendations	February 26, 2020

SCSC Renewal Application

The application is more streamlined than a school's original petition because its primary objective is to **evaluate a school's track record of performance** as measured by the CPF.

- Consists of three sections:
 - **Applicant Information** – provides contact information, identifies key components of the school and gives the applicant the opportunity to request changes if renewed
 - **CPF Performance** – completion of a matrix that identifies a school's academic, financial and operational performance on the CPF during the first four years of the charter contract
 - **Optional Narratives** – provides the school the optional opportunity to identify any dynamic external events, mitigating factors and efforts to remediate previously identified performance issues.
- The application is submitted online via the SCSC Administrative Portal.
 - Schools will receive notice that the application is awaiting completion and submission during their renewal cycle.

SCSC Renewal Interviews

SCSC Renewal Interviews will take place in late January of the renewal year.

- Interviews will last one hour.
- Each interview panel will consist of SCSC staff and two to four Commissioners.

School contingencies should include:

- a school leader (not necessarily the school principal but someone who has leadership duties at the school and can respond to academic questions);
- a business manager or financial director (not necessarily the CFO but someone—other than an ESP representative—who can speak to the school's financial operations);
- a board member who can speak to governance and operations;
- a board member who can speak to finance; and
- a board member who can speak to academics.

SCSC Staff Recommendations

SCSC staff anticipate bringing renewal recommendations to the Commissioners for a vote at the February SCSC meeting of the renewal year.

Recommendations will primary be based on the school's historical track record of performance and are likely to take one of three forms*:

- SCSC staff is recommending that the school be awarded a full 5-year renewal term.
- SCSC staff is recommending that the school be awarded an abbreviated 3-year renewal term.
- SCSC staff is recommending that the school not be renewed.

Schools that are not renewed will work with SCSC staff to ensure an orderly transition of students and subsequent closure by June 30th of the renewal year.

Questions

