

# State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

## Staff Recommendation

### 2019 Petition Cycle

July 31, 2019

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<b>School:</b>	Amana Academy West Atlanta
<b>Attendance Zone:</b>	Statewide with a brick-and-mortar location in the Atlanta Public Schools district
<b>Grade Levels:</b>	K-8
<b>Staff Recommendation:</b>	SCSC staff recommends that the petition for Amana Academy West Atlanta (Amana West) be <b>approved</b> by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a charter contract for the operation of a state charter school.
<b>Rationale:</b>	<p>The petition and information presented for Amana West met all requirements of rule and law and indicate that the school will operate as a high-quality charter school consistent with the SCSC's mission and the educational goals of Georgia. This is a petition for replication from Amana Academy. Amana Academy has consistently demonstrated success as a local charter school. Therefore, SCSC staff has reason to believe that Amana West will be positioned for long-term success.</p> <p>Amana West will ultimately serve grades K-8 and has an expected enrollment of 632 students in year five. The school will have a statewide attendance zone with a brick-and-mortar location in the Atlanta Public Schools district. Similar to Amana Academy, Amana West will also use an Expeditionary Learning educational model with elements of STEM education.</p>
<b>Link to Petition and Related Materials:</b>	<a href="#">Click here to view Amana Academy West Atlanta</a>

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<b>School:</b>	Atlanta SMART Academy
<b>Attendance Zone:</b>	Statewide with a brick-and-mortar location in the Atlanta Public Schools district
<b>Grade Levels:</b>	5-8
<b>Staff Recommendation:</b>	SCSC staff recommends that the petition for Atlanta SMART Academy be <b>approved</b> by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a charter contract for the operation of a state charter school.
<b>Rationale:</b>	<p>The petition and information presented by Atlanta SMART Academy met all requirements of rule and law and indicate that the school will operate as a high-quality charter school consistent with the SCSC's mission and the educational goals of Georgia.</p> <p>Atlanta SMART presents a strong educational plan that uses a project-based learning model with a focus on science, math, and the arts. The model includes a school week with four extended days and one shortened day a week.</p> <p>The school demonstrated its ability to operate as an LEA and its ability to recruit and train qualified teachers able to implement the curriculum. The school's budget demonstrates an understanding and capacity for school finance.</p>
<b>Link to Petition and Related Materials:</b>	<a href="#">Click here to view Atlanta SMART Academy</a>

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<b>School:</b>	Atlanta Unbound Academy
<b>Attendance Zone:</b>	Statewide with a brick-and-mortar location in Fulton County
<b>Grade Levels:</b>	K-8
<b>Staff Recommendation:</b>	SCSC staff recommends that the petition for Atlanta Unbound Academy be <b>approved</b> by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a charter contract for the operation of a state charter school.
<b>Rationale:</b>	<p>The petition and information presented by Atlanta Unbound Academy met all requirements of rule and law and indicate that the school will operate as a high-quality charter school consistent with the SCSC's mission and the educational goals of Georgia.</p> <p>Atlanta Unbound presents an educational model that contemplates a culturally-responsive, literacy focused curriculum. The Proposed model will also feature smaller class sizes and extended instruction time.</p> <p>The school demonstrated its ability to operate as an LEA and its commitment to attract a student body that represents the diversity of its community. The school's budget presents an understanding and capacity for school finance</p>
<b>Link to Petition and Related Materials:</b>	<a href="#">Click here to view Atlanta Unbound Academy</a>

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<b>School:</b>	Collegiate Academy of Albany
<b>Attendance Zone:</b>	Statewide with a brick-and-mortar location in Dougherty County
<b>Grade Levels:</b>	K-8
<b>Staff Recommendation:</b>	SCSC staff recommends that the petition for the Collegiate Academy of Albany be <b>approved</b> by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a charter contract for the operation of a state charter school.
<b>Rationale:</b>	<p>The petition and information presented by Collegiate Academy of Albany met all requirements of rule and law and indicate that the school will operate as a high-quality charter school consistent with the SCSC's mission and the educational goals of Georgia.</p> <p>The school will focus on college and career readiness by offering a college preparatory curriculum that is student-centered and data driven.</p> <p>The school demonstrated its ability to operate as an LEA and its commitment to attract a student body that represents the diversity of its community. The school's budget presents and understanding and capacity for school finance</p>
<b>Link to Petition and Related Materials:</b>	<a href="#">Click here to view Collegiate Academy of Albany</a>

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# State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

## Staff Recommendation 2019 Petition Cycle July 31, 2019

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<b>School:</b>	D.E.L.T.A STEAM Academy
<b>Attendance Zone:</b>	Multi-district defined attendance zone with a brick-and-mortar location in Douglas County
<b>Grade Levels:</b>	K-8
<b>Staff Recommendation:</b>	SCSC staff recommends that the petition for D.E.L.T.A STEAM Academy be <b>approved</b> by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a charter contract for the operation of a state charter school.
<b>Rationale:</b>	<p>The petition and information presented by D.E.L.T.A STEAM Academy met all requirements of rule and law and indicate that the school will operate as a high-quality charter school consistent with the SCSC's mission and the educational goals of Georgia.</p> <p>D.E.L.T.A STEAM presents an educational model that contemplates a science, technology, engineering, arts, and math immersion educational model which will feature elements of project-based learning and will focus on character development.</p> <p>The school demonstrated its ability to operate as an LEA and its commitment to attract a student body that represents the diversity of its community. The school's budget presents an understanding and capacity for school finance.</p>
<b>Link to Petition and Related Materials:</b>	<a href="#">Click here to view D.E.L.T.A STEAM Academy</a>

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# State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

## Staff Recommendation 2019 Petition Cycle July 31, 2019

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**School:** Furlow Charter School

**Attendance Zone:** Sumter County

**Grade Levels:** K-12

**Staff Recommendation:** SCSC staff recommends that the petition for Furlow Charter School be **approved** by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a charter contract for the operation of a state charter school.

**Rationale:** The petition and information presented by Furlow met all requirements of rule and law and indicate that the school will operate as a high-quality charter school consistent with the SCSC's mission and the educational goals of Georgia.

Furlow Charter School currently operates as a locally-approved charter school in the Sumter County School District. Furlow utilizes a project-based learning educational model that emphasizes service learning, language instruction, and fine arts instruction.

The school excels academically and has historically outperformed its district. Additionally, the school would have met SCSC financial expectations. Further, the Furlow Charter School governing board and leadership team present the capacity to operate a charter school that will likely be operationally compliant as an LEA.

**Link to Petition and  
Related Materials:**

[Click here to view Furlow Charter School](#)

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# State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

## Staff Recommendation 2019 Petition Cycle July 31, 2019

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<b>School:</b>	Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School
<b>Attendance Zone:</b>	Statewide with a brick-and-mortar location in Dekalb County
<b>Grade Levels:</b>	6-12
<b>Staff Recommendation:</b>	SCSC staff recommends that the petition for Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School be <b>approved</b> by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a charter contract for the operation of a state charter school.
<b>Rationale:</b>	<p>The petition and information presented by Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School met all requirements of rule and law and indicate that the school will operate as a high-quality charter school consistent with the SCSC's mission and the educational goals of Georgia.</p> <p>Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School will use a community-based school educational model that provides a culturally-relevant, project-based curriculum as well as wrap around services. The school will also offer a soccer program for all students. The school has a specific focus on English Language Learners.</p> <p>The school demonstrated its ability to operate as an LEA and its commitment to attract a student body that represents the diversity of its community. The school's budget presents an understanding and capacity for school finance</p>
<b>Link to Petition and Related Materials:</b>	<a href="#">Click here to view Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School</a>

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# State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

## Staff Recommendation 2019 Petition Cycle July 31, 2019

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<b>School:</b>	Destinations Career Academy of Georgia
<b>Attendance Zone:</b>	Statewide - Virtual
<b>Grade Levels:</b>	K-12
<b>Staff Recommendation:</b>	SCSC staff recommends that the petition for Destinations Career Academy of Georgia be <b>denied</b> .
<b>Rationale:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The proposed school did not demonstrate that the governing board possessed requisite capacity to operate a charter school that serves as its own Local Education Agency (LEA). The legal and operational requirements of operating an LEA necessitate broad knowledge as well as specialized expertise in a variety of areas and the current board lacks this variety of expertise. The school's governing board relied heavily upon the knowledge and experience of the proposed Education Service Provider (ESP) to demonstrate its ability to oversee school operations. Neither the petition nor the interview established that the governing board as a whole would be prepared to exercise substantive oversight over the entirety of a state charter school's operations.</li><li>2. The proposed school did not demonstrate that the governing board operated independently from its selected ESP to the extent necessary to hold the provider accountable for performance. A state charter school governing board must exercise substantive control over personnel decisions, financial decisions, curriculum and instruction, resource allocation, and other matters of school operations while adhering to the legal and operational requirements of serving as an LEA. While daily operational activities may be delegated to an ESP, the school's governing board must retain the independence to fulfill its duties and fiduciary obligations to students apart from an ESP. The governing board of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia did not establish its ability to exercise authority over the ESP.</li><li>3. The proposed schools' implementation of its educational model as described in the petition and interview is unclear. The petition indicates that the school will use project-based learning strategies; however, the board was unable to clearly articulate how that model would work in a virtual environment, particularly in lower grades. Additionally, while the governing board can contract with an ESP to administer the educational program, the board should be able to clearly articulate how the elements of the educational program will be implemented across the school.</li></ol>



**Link to Petition and  
Related Materials:**

[Click here to view Destinations Career Academy of Georgia](#)

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## Staff Recommendation 2019 Petition Cycle July 31, 2019

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<b>School:</b>	Infinity Charter School
<b>Attendance Zone:</b>	Statewide – Virtual
<b>Grade Levels:</b>	6-12
<b>Staff Recommendation:</b>	SCSC staff recommends that the petition for Infinity Charter School be <b>denied</b> .

<b>Rationale:</b>	<p>1. The proposed school did not demonstrate that identified school personnel possess the requisite capacity to operating a charter school that serves as its own Local Education Agency (LEA). The school did not present either the overarching systems or specific strategies for meeting all legal requirements necessary for fulfilling the obligations of operating an LEA. Additionally, the school did not evidence a process for identifying and selecting an administrator and/or administrative team possessing the requisite skills and knowledge to fulfill the school's LEA obligations.</p> <p>2. The implementation of the school's proposed on-site educational program as described in the petition and interview is unclear. The petition and interview both detailed the school's plan to require on-site enrichment programming every two weeks; however, neither the petition nor the interview were able to explain how students would be able to access these activities given the proposed statewide attendance zone. The petition and interview lacked details regarding the potential locations for the on-site programming and failed to identify strategies to ensure that all students would have access to these programs on a consistent basis. Additionally, the petition and interview failed to adequately describe the nature of these enrichment sessions and how they would complement the other elements of the educational model.</p> <p>3. The school did not detail a teacher recruitment plan that established its ability to recruit high-quality teachers to implement the school's specific model. Moreover, the school did not articulate a professional development plan that would adequately prepare teachers for instruction in a virtual environment. Neither the petition nor the interview articulated how the school will recruit and retain appropriately-skilled personnel within a competitive market.</p> <p>4. Although the proposed school acknowledges how the role of the governing board differs from that of school leadership, the petition and interview did not clearly define how the board would hold the school</p>
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administration accountable for performance on the SCSC's academic, financial, and operational accountability measures. This is particularly important given that the school leader will be a former board member. Given the proposed school leader's investment in the school and close connection with the governing board, the interview panel expressed concern that governing board would hold the school leader appropriately accountable for the school's academic, financial, and operational performance.

5. The school presented a budget proposal that was insufficient. Specifically, the school submitted a budget which amortized instructional costs and was dependent on outside fundraising efforts to maintain school operations.

**Link to Petition and  
Related Materials:**

[Click here to view Infinity Charter School](#)

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