

# Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

## Evaluation Rubric

**Authorizer Name:** Georgia State Charter School Commission (SCSC)

**Date:** September 2024

SUMMARY	RATING
Category I. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity	
1. Human Resources	EX
2. Financial Resources	EX
Category II. The Petition Process	
3. Petition Application	EX
4. Petition Review	AD
5. Petition Decisions	EX
Category III. Performance Contracting	
6. Pre-Opening Period	EX
7. Performance Standards	EX
8. Contract Terms and Agreements	EX
9. Authorizer Obligations	EX
Category IV. Oversight and Evaluation	
10. Compliance Monitoring	EX
11. Intervention	EX
12. Upholds Charter School Autonomy	AD
Category V. Renewal and Termination	
13. Renewal Process	EX
14. Renewal Decisions	EX
15. Closure/Termination	AD
<b>OVERALL RATING</b>	<b>EX</b>

OVERALL RATING CRITERIA	
Rating	Criteria
Needs Improvement (NI)	Earned a majority NI (8 or more) across all standards
Adequate (AD)	Earned any combination of ratings across standards expect as designated for NI or E
Exemplary (EX)	Earned a majority E (8 or more) and no NI across all standards
First Time Authorizer (FTA)	Charter authorizer in its first year of authorizing

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

### Category I. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity

**Standard 1. Human Resources.** The authorizer identifies appropriate personnel to carry out its authorizing obligations, including the point(s) of contact who will coordinate charter school support.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
<p>The authorizer has dedicated staff to supporting the charter schools in its portfolio.</p> <p>Whether staff are dedicated solely to charter school authorizing or have other duties, sufficient staff time and resources are allocated for the authorizer to fulfill its obligations, in light of the number of schools in the portfolio.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> Org chart outlines 19 positions, those only 16 are currently filled. (Website lists 13 staff). There were some discrepancies in the updated org chart and the website. Currently 50 authorized charter school in operation. Ratio of ~3:1 schools per FTE</p>	<p>The restructure has organized the office in a way to handle all the questions, issues, and needs of the field.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>Taken together, staff have adequate experience in charter authorizing or other relevant experience (e.g., education accountability, school funding and finance, education law and legal compliance).</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> Review of job descriptions and staff/candidate experience reflects relevant expertise for finance, legal, K-12 education and accountability, authorizing, and policy; includes preferences for charter school experience</p>	<p>The team has sufficient expertise and experience. One self-identified need of the office is more direct school (and specifically school leadership) experience on the team.</p>	<p>Q: My charter authorizing office has an adequate number of staff with relevant..." 12 Agree 2 Disagree</p> <p>"I would like to see more individuals with actual school leadership experience working with the SCSC. Legal experience is certainly required but someone who also has the capacity to understand how schools actually work would be welcomed." "The commission would greatly benefit from a staffer or two that has some experience or background in running a charter school. This is not so much out of a need for technical assistance help as it is a need to understand the challenges in running a school as they determine how to provide the oversight that they are statutorily required to provide.</p>	<p>Y</p>

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

<p>The roles and responsibilities of the authorizing office cover key responsibilities in a coherent structure, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Petition receipt and review,</li> <li>- Oversight of academic, financial, and operational performance, and</li> <li>- Designated point of contact for charter stakeholder inquiries.</li> </ul>	<p><b>MET</b></p> <p>Staff is assigned to key areas of responsibility; clearly outlined in org chart.</p> <p>No clear designated POC listed, though website has communications forms and a directory.</p>	<p>Clarified stakeholder inquiry POC as Tiffany Leach. The complaints form data is also exchanged with GaDOE to support.</p>	<p>“There have been a number of staffing changes within the SCSC along with a number of people being on leave. More recently when we reach out to the SCSC there seems to be at a disconnect of who knew what information.”</p>	<p>Y</p>
	<p>Needs Improvement (NI)</p>	<p>Adequate (AD)</p>	<p>Exemplary (EX)</p>	<p>Rating</p>
<p>Number of Criteria Met:</p>	<p>0-1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p><b>EX</b></p>
<p><b>Evaluator Comments:</b>                  The addition of the COO role has greatly increased the capacity of the SCSC to deliver upon the capacities within this standard – specifically within the advanced criteria. During the time of evaluation, the restructuring was still occurring. Staff are rightly focusing on supporting the restructure (recently completing an update to the compensation structure) and demonstrated an understanding of opportunity areas including staff development and strategic plan work.</p>				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth	
<p>The authorizer demonstrates its commitment to high-quality authorizing by building a healthy organization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organizational values (behavioral expectations) are explicit and enforced.</li> <li>- If applicable, authorizing is a visibly important function of the larger “parent” organization.</li> <li>- Staffing supports the authorizer’s goals and plans for the future.</li> </ul>	<p>The <a href="#">Mission and Vision of SCSC</a>, which is solely focused on authorizing, is prominently displayed on its website. There is clarity <a href="#">here</a> in the relationship between Commission staff, the Commissioners, and GaDOE (this was previously noted as an area of growth in the last evaluation).</p>		<p>The following question “Describe your main goal(s) as an authorizing office over the next 1-3 years” received a variety of responses. Some staff cited the strategic plan, others cited the mission posted on the <a href="#">website</a>, while others noted specific actions that included expansion, policy, funding, internal operations, or actions specific to their role at SCSC. When asked about progress on these goals, 5/11 staff cited progress on applications and openings in priority areas. It would be beneficial to ensure that all staff are aligned on the 1-3 long term goals so that everyone is pushing in the same direction. One response summarizes this nicely – “Generally we are successful at meeting these goals but at times it can feel like the end goal/target keeps moving so it can be hard to outright determine success”.</p> <p>More generally, the <a href="#">strategic plan</a> - published in 2022 - can be found on the website. It would be helpful for the SCSC to share their progress on the six objectives outlined in the plan.</p>	
<p>Employment and management practices attract and retain a diverse, effective team of authorizing professionals. This includes leadership and professional development,</p>	<p>Thinking critically about development and advancement to attract diverse and effective professionals with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide \$3k per staff member for development; pay for CLEs for legal, attend NACSACon annually;</li> </ul>		<p>During interviews, the SCSC staff indicated that they’d like to improve on identifying PD opportunities and evaluate staff on “use” of PD and support opportunities.</p>	

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

<p>clear decision-making criteria, and effective onboarding.</p>	<p>support with general skills-based training (e.g. excel lunch and learn)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Changed the way they approach staff meetings to get more stuff out there and provide more space for collaboration.</li></ul> <p>On the topic of role progression, the SCSC noted that there used to be blank spaces in the organizational chart for staff to better understand where growth opportunities were. This proved to be confusing for staff to understand how and where they could move within the organization. The SCSC is integrating conversations in 1:1's to better understand where employees want to grow either within or outside the organization.</p>	
--	---	--

**Standard 2. Financial Resources.** Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2068.1 and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2089, the authorizer allocates the required financial resources to support charter schools, treats charter schools no less favorably than other local schools within the system unless otherwise provided by law, and provides transparency on the availability and allocation of charter school funding.

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
<p>The authorizer clearly publishes and shares the calculation of current and anticipated public funding for each charter school in accordance with law, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GaDOE/SBOE/SCSC- district allotment sheets</li> <li>- Local Districts- allotment sheet itemizing the calculation of state, local and federal allocations to be provided.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Met.</b> Description and calculations of funding/allocations on <a href="#">website</a>.</p> <p>Link in SCSC funding presentation resource to <a href="#">GA DOE finance reports</a> for allocations.</p>	N/A	<p>Q: I can readily find or have access to the calculation of earned funding for..."</p> <p>12 Agree 2 Disagree</p> <p>"SCSC explains how to calculate but does not provide detailed calculation for each school"</p>	Y
<p>Budget allocations for the school reflect an administrative fee that aligns with the charter contract and applicable law.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> Authorizer fee is outlined <a href="#">here</a> at 1.7% for established schools and 0.7% for schools in their first year of operation. (Statute allows up to 3%)</p>	N/A	N/A	Y
<p>The authorizer publishes a budget reflecting the total amount received from any authorizing fees and other sources, and how those funds are allocated internally. The authorizer publishes the administrative services provided based on the administrative fees withheld.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> Agency budget with revenues posted <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	N/A	<p>Q: I believe my authorizer responsibly uses funds..."</p> <p>13 Agree 1 Disagree</p>	Y
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2	3	<b>EX</b>
<p>Evaluator Comments: N/A</p>				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth		
<p>The authorizer's budget is sufficient and aligned to the authorizer's goals.</p>	<p>Office staff feels the budget is sufficient to achieve its goals. SCSC operates conservatively, only withholding 1.7% of authorizer fee instead of 3%, and returning unused funds to schools.</p>			

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

### Category II. The Petition Process

**Standard 3. Petition Application.** The authorizer publishes a written petition application in accordance with state requirements and timelines. The authorizer provides reasonable and timely technical assistance and is responsive to petitioner questions.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer publishes petition materials (application, timelines, process and guidance) online in an easy-to- find location.	<p><b>Met.</b> Timelines and resources clearly and easily accessible for both <a href="#">new start</a> and <a href="#">replication</a>.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> The actual application is not available outside the application portal. This is referenced in Bootcamp, but recommended to be published as a downloadable file.</p>	N/A	Q: Petition materials were posted on my authorizer’s website in an easy to find...” 5 Agree	Y
The authorizer clearly articulates petition requirements. Requirements are focused on written content rather than form (i.e. application length, font size, etc.).	<p><b>Met.</b> Bootcamp, resource, and additional webinar outline requirements clearly.</p>	N/A	N/A	Y
The authorizer publishes times and locations for petition submission that are reasonable and easy to be met by the petitioner.	<p><b>Met.</b> Submission information shared via a training webinar that is also available online <a href="#">here</a> – upload via Fluid Review Portal. SCSC provides a training for the portal in November with deadline of March. The portal opens in October and deadline in March.</p>	N/A	Q: Times and locations for petition submission were clearly stated, accessible... 5 Agree	Y
The authorizer publishes staff contact information for technical assistance.	<p><b>Met.</b> Erin Wright is listed with contact information for managing petition process.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Petition materials posted on the website are strong. Given the restructure, the SCSC should review the point of contact listed on the website and individual materials to ensure there is clarity on point of contact.</p>	N/A	Q: Staff were available to provide technical assistance 5 Agree	Y
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4	<b>EX</b>

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

**Evaluator Comments:**

The SCSC is currently meeting the standards in this category. It is also especially important in this time of major transition and organizational restructuring to retain those high standards and ensure nothings falls through the cracks as ownership of workstreams and other responsibilities may shift.

Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
<p>The authorizer conducts informational sessions about the petition process.</p>	<p>The SCSC delivers a Petitioner Bootcamp which is recorded and available online. There are additional documents provided for guidance. Documents indicate two distinct webinars for potential applicants. These webinars provide information about the process and highlight new requirements and focus areas for applicants to consider.</p> <p>SCSC has a differentiated process for replication. Guidance is provided during the Bootcamp that explains the accelerated process and criteria.</p>	
<p>The authorizer provides clear guidance around attendance possibilities (e.g., statewide, district, or other geographic limitations), funding structure for budget development, and requirements to align petitions to demonstrated community need.</p>	<p>The SCSC provides this guidance in the Petitioner Bootcamp training. This is delivered as a live session but is also available online. Attendance guidance is provided in the petitioner bootcamp, <a href="#">petition instructions</a>, and separate <a href="#">attendance zones guidance</a>.</p> <p>The SCSC clearly indicates priority and non-priority areas and the relation to market saturation. Budget related submission guidance is given during the Bootcamp and there is an additional webinar that is delivered to support budget development as well as a Fiscal Feasibility guidance document that notes funding – which is calculated for schools in the budget template.</p> <p>Guidance is provided in the Bootcamp that notes how to align petitions to demonstrated community need – leveraging various documentation to connect to selected attendance zone. This includes: letters of support, intent to enroll, pre-enrollment forms, signed petitions, and meeting sign in sheets.</p>	

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

**Standard 4. Petition Review.** The authorizer conducts petition review in accordance with state requirements. The petition review includes an evaluation team of no fewer than three individuals with diverse expertise, with at least one of the individuals having charter school experience. For the review of local charter petitions at least one of the individuals on the evaluation team shall have local district administrative experience.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The petition evaluation team includes at least three individuals that have varied and relevant skills and backgrounds (i.e. education, finance, school governance, charter experience, trained in petition review or have completed a relevant training).	<p><b>Met.</b> FY23 &amp; 24 – There are 4 individuals staffed on the interview team for each application – 1 commissioner, 2-4 SCSC staff members, 1 National Expert and 1 local expert.</p> <p>Deep experience in education, specifically pedagogy and data and assessment. The list lacked finance, governance and operational expertise in FY23. There was a noticeable improvement in the expertise brought on as indicated by the FY24 interview schedule which included Carmen Freemire for finance expertise.</p>	SCSC feels they are finding sufficient expertise, especially from the education policy and non-profit sectors. Though it is difficult to find reviewers with in-depth charter experience that do not have conflicts of interest in the field.	N/A	Y
The authorizer publishes the petition evaluation criteria and the requirements for petition approval on the authorizer’s website.	<p><b>Not Met.</b> Evaluation criteria is not posted on the website.</p>	There are training related materials that talks about how SCSC evaluates. However, there is not a rubric that is shared out with schools. Some internal documents exist, but those are more for reviewers.	Q: I was provided access to petition evaluation rubrics and had a sufficient understanding... 5 Agree	N
The review process includes an interview.	<b>Met.</b>	N/A	N/A	Y



## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Petition review and interview process are free of conflict of interest.	<b>Met.</b>	N/A	Q: I believe the petition process was free from conflicts of interest. 5 Agree	Y
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4	<b>AD</b>
Evaluator Comments: N/A				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth		
The authorizer trains evaluators to ensure consistent application of petition evaluation criteria. Evaluators discuss ratings and develop a list of questions to inform the interview.	A Petition Evaluation Guide is available that outlines characteristics of evaluation standards (good, adequate, and deficient) and the characteristics of capacity in 6 key areas (Academics, Finance, Operations, Governance, Enrollment, and Facilities). In the January 2024 revised version of this document, the guide includes historical reasons for petition denial in the areas of academics, operations, governance, and finance.	<p>The SCSC could consider building on the training provided to evaluators to ensure consistent and quality application of the petition evaluation criteria. Completed reviews by evaluators (see The Wright Community School) include evaluative comments that lack specific examples to back up claims that the petition components meet or do not meet the criteria. Some evaluations include questions and asks for additional information (Gayla Robbins' review of AA Steam &amp; Entrepreneurship Academy), some simply provide bullet points and generalized statement such as "Good academic overview with appropriate detail and information" (see Carolyn Bridge's review of Harvest Academy). It was noted during the site visit that SCSC staff primarily utilize their evaluation to inform interview questions and supplement with external evaluator feedback. It was unclear how much weight external evaluator comments were given within the overall evaluation process.</p> <p>SCSC would benefit from including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation Rubric – this would require evaluators to rate criteria as good, adequate or deficient and provide comments to support the specific rating for each criteria.</li> <li>• Consensus Making – bringing evaluators and their rubrics together prior to the interview would assist in distilling concerns into clear questions that will assist in the overall decision making process following the interview and utilize all expertise (internal and external).</li> </ul>		

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

<b>Standard 5. Petition Decisions.</b> The authorizer grants charters only to petitioners that have demonstrated competence and capacity to succeed in all aspects of the school, including a strong plan for improving student opportunities and outcomes. The authorizer makes petition decisions that are free from conflicts of interest.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Authorization decisions are based on evidence tied to the petition evaluation criteria, applicable accountability metrics, and legal requirements.	<b>Met.</b> See <a href="#">example</a> .	N/A	N/A	Y
If denied, petitioner is provided a written detailed description of deficiencies and information about how to reapply in the future.	<b>Met.</b> See <a href="#">example</a> .	N/A	N/A	Y
In the case of denied applications, the authorizer provides the applicant with detailed feedback to provide a public record of why the applicant was denied and assist the applicant if it wants to reapply in the future.	<b>Met.</b> See <a href="#">example</a> .	N/A	N/A	Y
Recommendations are shared with petitioners at least one week prior to the authorizing board meeting and within 90 days of receiving the complete application.	<b>Met.</b> Colearn app due 3/17. Denial notification sent 6/13. Published 6/21 and board vote on 6/28.  2024 Movement - Application submission deadline was March 15. Info request June 13, final recommendation July 17. The timeline for FY24 did not provide a recommendation within 90 days of receiving the petition.	See Evaluator Comments.	N/A	Y (N/A)
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4	<b>EX</b>
Evaluator Comments: <b>Updating the Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric</b> - It is recommended that Category II, Standard 5: Petition Decisions be updated to better reflect the flexibility needed for the Commission’s petition review timeline. Currently, the fourth criteria states:				

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

“Recommendations are shared with petitioners at least one week prior to the authorizing board meeting and within 90 days of receiving the complete application.”

Given that much of the Commission’s petition review work and ability to act can be dependent on a local district’s completion of certain tasks, the 90-window is not always a reasonable timeline to adhere to. The Commission does aim to complete petition reviews in a reasonable amount of time and ensure a sufficient pre-opening period exists to set new schools up for success. For future evaluations, the rubric should reflect the flexibility needed for different Georgia authorizers to complete the petition review process.

Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
<p>Application decisions reflect rigorous consideration of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The educational program’s likelihood of success and the applicants’ capacity for educating children well,</li> <li>- The business and organizational plans’ viability,</li> <li>- The experience and capacity of the applicant team (board and proposed leaders) to implement the proposed educational, business, and organizational program, and to manage any service provider contracts.</li> </ul>	<p>The heart of this criteria is how quality is defined by SCSC staff and board. The SCSC has conducted retreats and engaged in “stickier” conversations to better understand each other. As a result, staff recommendations and board decisions have been more aligned than what was found in the previous evaluation. SCSC should continue to engage in these conversations.</p>	<p>8/12 staff agreed with the following statement “We only grant charters to applicants who demonstrate a strong capacity to establish and operate a quality charter school.</p> <p>Staff survey responses and site visit interviews indicated that some board decisions were influenced by political pressure which resulted in decisions that were not aligned with staff recommendations. While agreement isn’t necessarily the goal, it may be worth considering the timing of retreats to align with decision making opportunities.</p>
<p>The authorizer board’s decisions generally align with staff recommendations. Conditional approvals are only granted for making specific technical changes and not as a means to allow the applicants to further develop proposals.</p>	<p>A staff member noted in the staff survey that a retreat was held with commissioners focused on building consensus around agency shared values. As a result, they noted that voting has mostly been aligned to staff recommendations (except for one). This appears to be an improvement from last evaluation.</p> <p>SCSC is making progress and taking initiative during board retreats to better align vision and decision-making to ensure alignment.</p>	<p>2/12 SCSC staff disagreed with the following statement: “The authorizing decision-making body supports staff recommendations regarding the approval, renewal, and revocation of charters.”</p> <p>There were comments from two staff members that decision making remains an area of improvement: “Remaining consistent in our decision making that we know, based on history, is generally on track and successful. External factors can influence the Commission and result in unknown or unfavorable outcomes” and “In more recent years, our board of commissioners have become more political. We will need to constantly have values-based discussions to refocus efforts made by lobbyists”.</p>

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

### Category III. Performance Contracting

**Standard 6. Pre-Opening Period.** The authorizer establishes clear and necessary, but not overly burdensome expectations for the pre-opening period including, but not limited to, expectations regarding facilities, student enrollment and board development.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
<p>The authorizer has a pre-opening checklist or other process that clearly communicates to schools what key readiness requirements must be met to open.</p> <p>The checklist or process includes adequate timelines, deliverables, responsible parties, and notes which criteria may defer opening.</p>	<b>Met.</b>	N/A	N/A	Y
<p>Pre-opening expectations specify facility requirements that include, GaDOE Facilities Division sign off, obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy and submitting an Emergency Plan to required agencies.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> These components are included, but draft agreement/lease is a requirement. At what point is a fully executed lease/purchase agreement required?</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> While the language around priority milestones indicate the need to meet 85% of enrollment target by April 26 of the opening year, there is a milestone for adjusting budget based on enrollment. It is unclear if meeting enrollment targets is required for opening or if the ability to adjust budget overrides.</p>	N/A	N/A	Y
<p>Pre-opening expectations specify student enrollment requirements including a minimum and maximum threshold to operate.</p>	<b>Met.</b>	N/A	N/A	Y
<p>Pre-opening expectations specify board development requirements including required trainings, policy development and operational oversight procedures.</p>	<b>Met.</b>	N/A	N/A	Y
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4	<b>EX</b>

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Evaluator Comments: N/A		
Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
The authorizer uses the pre-opening process to build relationships, set expectations for school performance, and provide technical assistance to schools.	<p>The pre-opening guidance provides sufficient detail and resources for schools.</p> <p>SCSC staff identified their attempts to try to start pre-opening process on the front end by framing it for schools. Encourage schools to notify the SCSC of problems early and that it is in the school's and the SCSC's best interest to have a successful opening. Early notification allows the SCSC to put the "TA hat" on.</p>	There are always opportunities to utilize continuous engagement and touchpoints to further develop and enhance relationships. One consideration cited by the staff is to also be mindful of the balance of support and school autonomy (and being clear about the SCSC role in any given situation) especially given the different needs related to start-up CSP support, authorizer oversight, and technical assistance.
Is there a history of schools opening despite not meeting all of the pre-opening requirements? If so, why?	Yes, certain requirements are less significant than others. Some would result in a delayed opening rather than not opening.	
Is there a history of schools not opening on time? If so, why?	Yes, facilities and enrollment continue to be a challenge. If a school is trending behind on pre-opening criteria, the SCSC starts to have conversations in January/February to guide schools to make the decision to defer.	
In cases where a school's opening was delayed, did the authorizer make the decision early enough so that students and parents could make other arrangements?	If a school is trending behind on pre-opening criteria, SCSC starts to have conversations in January/February to guide schools to make the decision to defer which allows for families to make other arrangements.	

**Standard 7. Performance Standards.** The authorizer, through the performance contract, establishes high academic, financial, and operational performance standards under which schools will be evaluated, using objective and verifiable measures of student achievement and growth as the primary measure of school quality.

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Performance standards are included or referenced in the performance contract. These include clearly defined targets, thresholds or goals for each evaluation measure.	<b>Met.</b> The CPF outlined the goals and targets for each measure.	N/A	Q: The performance targets, thresholds or goals for my school are clearly defined... 11 Agree	Y
Evaluation measures allow for annual review.	<b>Met.</b> Annual evaluation is noted in section 9b of the contract.	N/A	See survey response above.	Y
Data sources used to evaluate performance are objective and verifiable.	<b>Met.</b> Data is collected from information submitted to GADOE. See “Evaluator Comments” for an area of opportunity with mission-specific goals.	Most schools include mission specific goals in organizational framework. Schools are given guidance on crafting these and SCSC reviews and signs off on goals. Data is sent to GaDOE and SCSC receives a report.	N/A	Y
The authorizer measures academic performance using a framework that includes clearly defined expectations for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student achievement</li> <li>• Student progress measures</li> </ul> <p>Expectations consider ALL students, including students with special needs, students with disabilities, and English Learners.</p>	<b>Met.</b> The PF includes content mastery and growth measures for whole school and grade bands. Subgroup performance is embedded in CCRPI. If meeting in any area, that rating is used. See “Evaluator Comments” for a recommendation.	SCSC has views of subgroup data, but it is rolled up in GaDOE calculations. They have had conversations in the past about additional emphasis on subgroup performance, but no push from stakeholders to include more.	Q: The academic performance standards in my charter contract include both student achievement and student progress measures. 11 Agree	Y
Financial, operational and governance standards are grounded in best practice. Standards in these areas that are in addition to legal requirements are reasonable and not overly burdensome.	<b>Met.</b> Indicators and measures are aligned to NACSA best practice. There is a strong focus on compliance.	N/A	N/A	Y
The authorizer measures financial performance standards that enable the authorizer to assess and monitor schools’ financial viability. These include clearly defined metric and targets to assess near-term performance and long-term financial sustainability.	<b>Met.</b>	N/A	N/A	Y

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Operational standards include measures in the following areas: educational program compliance, financial oversight, governance and transparency, protecting the rights of students and employees, and ensuring a safe school environment.	<b>Met.</b>	Staff recognized focus on compliance and see opportunity for increased focus on quality measures.	N/A	Y
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-2	3-5	6-7	<b>EX</b>
<p>Evaluator Comments:</p> <p><b>Academic Framework</b> – While the CPF captures subgroup performance, this performance is rolled in with other performance data. As a result, it is harder to discern how an individual campuses’ subgroups are performing. It is NACSA’s recommendation that the SCSC include a distinct measure around English Learner and Students with Disabilities performance. Mission-specific goals fit within the Operational Framework at the SCSC and it was noted that they are developed by schools and not heavily weighted. NACSA recommends that these measures remain rigorous and aligned to the school’s mission and urges schools to leverage a logic model and partner with their authorizer to develop (see <a href="#">NACSA’s Performance Framework</a>).</p>				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth		
<p>The authorizer reviews financial data and determines, based on the circumstances of each school, whether the school presents a low, medium, or high risk for financial failure. This includes assessing whether the school maintains and implements compliant policies and procedures for expending state and federal funds and maintains an appropriate and legally compliant level of transparency regarding budgeting and finance.</p>	<p>In the staff survey and conversations during the site visit, SCSC staff acknowledged that financial oversight is a challenge that schools need, and staff are working to provide support around building financial literacy. Notably, the SCSC has updated their budget template, provided training and information via newsletters, and is utilizing corrective actions to encourage schools to review and update financial practices. SCSC conducts “high-risk” monitoring for schools in their first year and looks at enrollment, negative fund balance, and schools that have less than 15 days cash on hand.</p>	<p>From staff survey: “We need to improve financial guidance particularly regarding federal requirements- many of our schools have difficulty when they are monitored by the SEA’s Federal Programs Office.”</p>		
<p>The authorizer verifies that its schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adhere to applicable open meetings and records requirements.</li> <li>• Maintain compliant policies and procedures for serving special student populations, including students with disabilities and those identified as gifted, experiencing homelessness, or as English Learners (EL).</li> <li>• Adhere to the requirements of the charter contracts and applicable education laws, rules, and regulations.</li> </ul>	<p>SCSC has measures and holds school accountable to compliance related items in this section.</p>	<p>Currently, the performance requirements and measures focus heavily on compliance. There is potential to expand measures of accountability address more specifically the <i>quality</i> of implementation. Gifted students and students experiencing homelessness are not explicitly noted in the CPF.</p>		

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

**Standard 8. Contract Terms and Agreements.** The authorizer executes an initial contract for a term of five years that clearly outlines the rights and responsibilities of the school and the authorizer. Agreements related to funding or in-kind services not required by OGGA §20-2-2068.1 or §20-2-2089 or that are not included in the charter contract, must be negotiated and executed in writing and signed by the local authorizer and charter school (for local charter schools) or the State Charter Schools Commission and state charter school (for state charter schools).



## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Executes a contract with a legally incorporated, nonprofit governing board independent of the authorizer	<b>Met.</b> <a href="#">Sample contract</a> posted on SCSC website	N/A	N/A	Y
Initial contract terms are five years as stated in SBOE rule 160-4-9.-05	<b>Met.</b> Section 2 of the <a href="#">contract</a> outlines the charter term of 5 years.	N/A	N/A	Y
The performance contract details the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, funding, oversight, performance measures, and consequences for not meeting performance measures and material terms.	<b>Met.</b>	N/A	N/A	Y
The authorizer provides adequate and appropriate guidance to schools regarding what kinds of programmatic or operational changes constitute material changes that require authorizer approval.	<b>Met.</b> Website outlines difference between administrative changes and material changes requiring amendment. Some examples of administrative clarifications are provided, and POC is listed to clarify amendment questions.  <b>Recommendation:</b> provide a table or set of examples of the most common amendment requests to accompany the administrative examples.	N/A	N/A	Y
Specific services provided by the authorizer are negotiated and agreed to by both parties and are outlined in a separate written contract or service agreement, if applicable.	Not applicable for the Commission. Schools are their own LEA.	N/A	N/A	Y (N/A)
Contract and/or related agreements establish equitable per-pupil funding terms or amounts as required by state law.	<b>Met.</b> QBE Formula Earnings noted in the contract. (Section 16I)	N/A	Q: My authorizer has provided my school equitable per-pupil funding as... 12 Agree  “As local property values increase, the gap in state charter school and local charter school funding, that for a time had been relatively narrow, has begun to widen again”	Y

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-2	3-4	5-6	<b>EX</b>
Evaluator Comments: N/A				

**Standard 9. Authorizer Obligations.** The authorizer follows all authorizing obligations outlined in law, State Board Rule, and the charter contract.

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer's contracts include or refer to the state and federal laws and other legal requirements the school must meet.	<b>Met.</b>	N/A	N/A	Y
A local board of education authorizer makes unused facilities (as defined by 20-2-2068.2 (h)(2)) available to local charters. The SCSC follows guidelines from the state properties commission.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Y (N/A)
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0	1	2	<b>EX</b>
Evaluators Comments: N/A				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth	
The authorizer publicly posts a current list of unused facilities concurrently with the regular charter petition process.	N/A		N/A	

### Category IV. Oversight and Evaluation

**Standard 10. Compliance Monitoring.** The authorizer protects the public interest and holds charter schools accountable for their obligations of governance, management, and oversight of public funds. The authorizer defines, communicates, and effectively implements the

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

processes, methods, and timing of collecting and reporting school performance and compliance information. The authorizer conducts school visits as appropriate and necessary, and annually publishes school performance data.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer has a documented process for oversight and evaluation that aligns with the provisions of the performance contract.	<b>Met.</b> See <a href="#">Monitoring Handbook</a> .	N/A	See responses under Standard 12.	Y
The authorizer has a documented process for conducting school site visits that includes a review of school performance and compliance in alignment with the contract, and/or subsequent agreements.	<b>Met.</b> Site visits are considered “Health and Safety Facility Visits”. There is an established checklist for these visits. See pg. 19 of <a href="#">Monitoring Handbook</a> .	N/A	N/A	Y
The authorizer clearly communicates its oversight processes, including site visits, and how information gleaned from those activities is used to hold schools accountable.	<b>Met.</b> FY24 Monitoring Handbook located <a href="#">here</a> . Included in this handbook is video on how to complete monitoring tasks and timeline overview.	N/A	Q: The process my authorizer uses to evaluate my school’s performance is clear...” 13 Agree	Y
The authorizer conducts an on-site visit to each charter school at least once during the school’s charter term.	<b>Met.</b>	N/A	Q: My authorizer has/will conduct at least one compliance site visit during my... 13 Agree	Y
Each year, the authorizer publishes a report on its website with individual and aggregate level school performance results based on evaluation measures included in the contracts, comparing academic, financial, and organizational performance of each school to established expectations.	<b>Met.</b> Report for each year published on the website <a href="#">here</a> . Historical information provided within the report is helpful – the headers for the years seem misaligned and could be adjusted for greater clarity.	N/A	Q: I can readily find on my authorizer’s website my school’s performance results 13 Agree	Y
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-2	3-4	5-6	<b>EX</b>
<b>Evaluator Comments:</b> The SCSC noted: operational scores in the CPF in the last 2 years have had a lot of red/yellow ratings. There is a tendency to ignore these operational ratings when discussing renewal since the quantity of reds/yellows across the board for schools can raise the question of how much weight to place on operational ratings.				
<b>Advanced Criteria</b>	<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Areas of Growth</b>	

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

<p>The authorizer knows, at any given time, how a school is doing.</p>	<p>The data dashboard <a href="#">located here</a> provides a snapshot for each school’s performance on the CPF. Each month, staff review the status of all schools in the portfolio during team meetings.</p>	<p>Multiple staff identified the need for a centralized data system to more accurately and efficiently collect, store, and access data and reports on schools.</p>
<p>The authorizer provides clear technical assistance to schools to ensure timely compliance with new or revised laws.</p>	<p>Staff noted that they hear often from schools if they feel like they didn’t get advance notice. SCSC is aware and wants schools to know. Previously, SCSC would evaluate state legislation at the end of the term and compile a stand-alone legislation guidance document on new bills signed and circulate with schools. This year, they have a legal obligations document on the website – under “resources for existing schools” which is meant as a comprehensive resource to see all the different laws that apply to schools. SCSC took all the new legislation and incorporated that in red font and made that legal obligations documents available by announcing at board meeting, emailing, including in newsletter, and announcing in monitoring webinar.</p>	
<p>The authorizer differentiates its oversight to ensure that time and resources are allocated effectively based on school performance and capacity, as well as the authorizer’s goals.</p>	<p>There are two elements to SCSC’s operational monitoring – document submission and a health and safety visit. The SCSC differentiates the health and safety visit based on risk level.</p> <p>Document submission is the same for every school. Though the staff noted that an updated data management system would allow them to more efficiently collect only new of updated documents annually.</p>	<p>From a school survey respondent - “While we understand the need for thorough monitoring, the annual monitoring for operations is very time-consuming and arduous. We feel that this could be much more stream-lined and differentiated by schools’ years of existence and track record for performance. This would allow school leaders to focus more time and energy where it matters most, the academic performance.”</p> <p>The SCSC does not differentiate the document submission element of operational monitoring. School surveys indicated that monitoring can be “very time-consuming and arduous” for school leaders. Schools are asked to submit the same documentation every monitoring cycle. The SCSC should consider leveraging technology and systems to streamline this process. This would not only impact the capacity of schools in the portfolio but also the SCSC staff responsible for monitoring.</p>
<p>Site visits are structured in a way that enables the authorizer to gather the information needed to evaluate the school appropriately and that respects school autonomy.</p>	<p>Site visits are considered “Health and Safety Facility Visits”. There is an established checklist for these visits (pg. 19 of FY24 Monitoring Handbook) that provide clear criteria that can be observed by whoever is staffed on the site visit.</p>	
<p>School leaders understand their performance status.</p>	<p>13 school respondents agreed to the statement “I can readily find on my authorizer’s website my school’s performance</p>	<p>Comments left within the school survey indicate that more can be done between the SCSC and school</p>

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

	<p>results". This indicates that schools are able to find their performance results.</p>	<p>when it comes to communicating and remedying compliance issues. One respondent noted that some findings felt like a "gotcha": "I think the compliance review process could be improved to make it a bit more focused on simply making sure schools can show compliance rather than what seems at times like a "gotcha". Another school noted that compliance issues feel "adversarial": "... a concerted effort to work a bit more collaboratively with schools to ensure compliance instead of what seems, at times, a bit adversarial. To a certain extent, that may be unavoidable, but I do think there is some space for improvement and understand that there may be some ideas in place to move in that direction." These notes both indicated that there may not be a strong understanding of performance.</p>
--	--	---

Standard 11. Intervention. The authorizer gives schools evidence-based, and timely notice of contract violations or performance deficiencies and allows schools reasonable time and opportunity for remediation.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
<p>The authorizer has an intervention protocol which determines when it may intervene and what consequences are possible (from a conversation to probation or other more serious actions). The intervention protocol</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> SCSC <a href="#">monitoring handbook</a> outlines how compliance, performance, site visits, etc. Are used for monitoring schools. The</p>	<p>Staff survey Q: "We utilize established intervention policies to communicate unsatisfactory..."</p>	<p>There was disagreement about how effectively this protocol is communicated to schools. See survey responses in standard 12.</p>	<p>Y</p>

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

<p>includes actions that result from annual reviews using the performance framework and interventions required outside of “normal” monitoring findings (i.e. parent phone calls). This protocol is clearly communicated to schools.</p>	<p>SCSC identifies two types of compliance concerns: Findings = violations of statutory, regulatory or contractual requirements Adverse = deficiencies that are not violations of statutory, regulatory or contractual requirements School survey feedback seems to indicate an understanding of the protocol but the administration of the protocol by SCSC is where schools have critical feedback. See Standard 12 for more information.</p>	<p>10 agree 2 neutral</p>		
<p>Following each compliance site visit the authorizer provides timely written notification that includes information collected during the site visit, a summary of findings and areas needing improvement. The findings are tied directly to applicable law or contract requirements.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> Site visits completed September 1 – October 31. Results delivered January 31, 2024.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Q: Following each compliance site visit my authorizer provided written notification... 13 Agree</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>The authorizer provides written notice to the school of any contract breaches or areas of noncompliance in a reasonable timeframe.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> September monitoring results were communicated to schools by Jan 31, 2024. Appeals were due within 1 week. Corrective action plans due within 6 weeks.</p>	<p>Typically, schools are able to meet the 1-week turnaround – SCSC has not heard complaints about the appeal window – there are complaints about the appeal process (wrong documentation submitted – see below) but NOT the timing.</p>	<p>Q: My authorizer notifies me of any contract breaches in a timely manner and... 8 Agree 1 Disagree</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>The authorizer allows the school adequate time to remedy any identified areas of noncompliance, respecting the school’s autonomy to determine how to remediate the noncompliance, when appropriate.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> Monitoring results issued by SCSC by January 31, 2024 (at the latest). Appeal submissions due within 1 week following the receipt of monitoring results. Corrective Action Plans (CAP) due 6 weeks from receipt of monitoring results.</p>	<p>“Reasoning for moving the incorrect document submission to the CAP vs. Allowing schools to correct without impact – you want operational monitoring to be a “snapshot in time”. Accounting for a school that might say we had</p>	<p>See standard 12 re: autonomy.</p>	<p>Y</p>

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

		the correct documentation and didn't give it to them – there is a possibility that the school didn't have the right documents and made something during the appeals time. That is why we give partial points.”		
	Needs Improvement (Ni)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2	3-4	<b>EX</b>
<p>Evaluator Comments:</p> <p>There were some comments within the school survey that the evaluators would like to flag as it relates to the final criteria in this section - “The authorizer allows the school adequate time to remedy any identified areas of noncompliance, respecting the school’s autonomy to determine how to remediate the noncompliance, when appropriate”. While evaluators still considered the criteria “Met”, it is still worth noting here for reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This year, there has been <b>noticeable lack of consistent policies and clear expectations regarding how decisions are made, making actions feel subjective rather than rule-based</b>”</li> <li>- “We feel that there is sometimes overreach in operational monitoring, especially when it comes to policies. There have been <b>many times when there are “findings” or “adverse practices” related to policies that identify things the SCSC thinks are missing from the policy, but there is no requirement in applicable laws</b> that those things must be in the policy”</li> </ul>				

<b>Standard 12. Upholds Charter School Autonomy.</b> The authorizer upholds charter school autonomy in school level governance, including personnel decisions, financial decisions, curriculum and instruction, resource allocation, establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, and school operations.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The contract and the authorizer’s practices recognize the school’s autonomy in school governance, instructional program implementation, personnel, and budgeting.	<b>Not Met.</b> The contract provides clear recognition of school autonomy, however, based on school feedback, there have been instances in which the authorizer’s practices do not demonstrate this.	SCSC staff recognize the balance of autonomy and accountability during site visit conversations. SCSC is aware of the fact that monitoring feels burdensome for schools.	Q: My authorizer does not interfere with my school’s autonomy in school governance... 10 Agree 3 Disagree  “I’ve had clear and effective communication with the SCSC in the past. However, this year, the SCSC implemented	N



## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

			<p>a detailed plan addressing a concern that wasn't explicitly documented"</p> <p>"We feel that there is sometimes overreach in operational monitoring, especially when it comes to policies. There have been many times when there are <b>"findings" or "adverse practices" related to policies that identify things the SCSC thinks are missing from the policy, but there is no requirement in applicable laws that those things must be in the policy.</b>" – <i>Evaluators followed up with this respondent. There appears to be differing interpretations of policy and how it should be reflected in practice.</i></p>	
<p>Specific requirements not otherwise required under state law are either included in the charter contract or charter schools are <i>notified at least one year prior</i> to the requirement going into effect.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> See survey comment re: SCSC requirements not outlined in state law.</p>	<p>See standard 10 – advanced criteria. Staff indicated multiple avenues in which schools are notified of requirements and that at least one year is provided before the requirement goes into effect.</p>	<p>Q: If changes, beyond what is captured in state law, occur to the performance expectations of my school, I am adequately notified through agreement via a charter contract amendment or I am given at least one year's notice before the change goes into effect" 10 Agreed 1 Disagreed</p>	Y
	Needs Improvement	Adequate	Exemplary	
Number of Criteria Met:	0	1	2	<b>AD</b>
<p>Evaluator Comments: N/A Staff survey feedback noted "It can be challenging to ensure that policies and standards are equitably and fairly applied to all schools. Staff with more historic knowledge and having been with the agency longer typically have internal knowledge to apply to authorizer decisions that may not always be translated to newer staff potentially evaluating similar situation."</p> <p>While this historical knowledge is helpful, at times it can result in inequitable application of policies and subjective decision-making. This practice of leveraging historical knowledge may explain some of the critical feedback received from schools around school autonomy. While the SCSC has a Monitoring handbook, NACSA recommends revisiting this guidance to norm around organizational philosophy and approach to oversight and developing and codifying additional tools within the organization.</p>				

# Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

## Category V. Renewal and Termination

**Standard 13. Renewal and Termination Process.** The authorizer clearly communicates to schools the criteria for charter termination, renewal and non-renewal that are consistent with the terms of the charter contract. The renewal process includes a written application and an opportunity for an interview.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Renewal process, criteria, and a general timeline are clearly communicated to schools well in advance of renewal and are published in a publicly accessible location. The process includes a written renewal application and an opportunity interview to make factual corrections or	<b>Met.</b> <a href="#">Renewal guidance</a> provides clear criteria and timelines. <a href="#">Website</a> also has page dedicated to communicating renewal information. The renewal process includes a written application, interview, and recommendation – which schools are	SCSC is talking to schools for entire renewal school year. Their ability to submit info and clarification happens throughout process. The official process allows schools to send things, typically following a site visit or report about how the school	Q: The criteria and process for charter renewal are published in a publicly... 12 Agree 1 Disagree	Y

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

<p>present supplementary evidence of performance.</p>	<p>able to review prior to being released to the public.</p> <p>It is not clear if during the interview the school is able to make factual corrections, but they are able to use the opportunity to “discuss its performance and any meaningful actions it took to improve performance”.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> The SCSC may want to consider providing clarity about the opportunity to make factual corrections. School survey feedback indicates that not all schools may be aware that the webpage has been updated. It may be helpful to communicate for schools approaching renewal.</p>	<p>is tracking toward renewal. There is usually not something new at renewal time that isn’t already known. Schools can already submit rebuttal information annually during CPF. Less to rebut on the academic side. For schools on the bubble claiming progress, SCSC will request benchmark assessments. Becomes a bigger deal for schools who might get abbreviated terms.</p>	<p>“The SCSC has been clear about the renewal and termination process. I selected disagree in some areas because the SCSC has not posted this year’s renewal process and dates as of yet.”</p> <p>“Our renewal process went very smoothly this past year”</p>	
<p>Renewal criteria are transparent, specific and align to performance standards and expectations outlined in the charter contract.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Q: The criteria in which my school will be evaluated on to determine renewal... 13 Agree</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>The authorizer uses a track record of performance over multiple years to make renewal determinations.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Q: My authorizer assesses my school’s performance over the course of the charter 13 Agree</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>Revocation criteria are clearly communicated to schools.</p> <p>The authorizer provides written warning, timeline, and notice of anticipated termination prior to the end of the charter school renewal period.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b></p> <p>Revocation criteria are outlined in contracts (Section 29) and within promulgated <a href="#">rules</a>. The last revocation decision occurred in 2020; therefore, the evaluators are unable to provide a rating for revocation processes. The SCSC has made 2 closure decisions in 2024.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Y</p>
	<p>Needs Improvement</p>	<p>Adequate</p>	<p>Exemplary</p>	<p>Rating</p>
<p>Number of Criteria Met:</p>	<p>0-1</p>	<p>2-3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p><b>EX</b></p>
<p><b>Evaluator Comments:</b> The SCSC has not made any non-renewal decisions in the last 5-7 years. The most recent termination occurred in 2021 which was a mid-charter term closure/emergency suspension and closure. Two non-renewal decisions were made in 2024 based on school performance. Interviews with commissioners and staff</p>				

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

demonstrated the alignment and understanding that the decisions communicated to the community that the SCSC is willing to make these difficult decisions to ensure that only quality options are being provided to students and families in Georgia.

Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
<p><u>Expansion and Replication</u> The authorizer communicates clear processes, criteria, and standards for expansion and replication, so schools know when such applications are likely to be successful.</p>	<p><u>Website</u> contains a page specific to replication and includes guidance and resources. A lot of this work will happen through the CSP grant, but there are also stipulations for CPF performance related to CSP.</p> <p>At renewal time, schools identify grades and number of students, as well as if they have a request to add grades or enrollment. Communicated that if you are on track to 5-year renewal, that renewal is a good time to request and expand.</p>	<p>The SCSC can consider adding this opportunity within the renewal guidance that is published to help guide schools through the renewal process.</p>

**Standard 14. Renewal Decisions.** The authorizer bases renewal decisions on a thorough analyses of the criteria outlined in the charter contract, with objective and verifiable measures of student achievement and growth as the primary measure of school quality. The authorizer ensures the renewal decision-making processes are free of conflicts of interest. The authorizer communicates renewal decisions to the school community and public within a timeframe that allows parents and students to exercise choices for the coming school year.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
<p>Renewal/nonrenewal recommendations are provided through prompt, written notification to the school's governing board and the public within a reasonable timeframe, following the availability of necessary data, as to provide parents and students time to exercise choices for the upcoming school year.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> Email notice to school sent 2/9/2022. Public posting 2/16/22. Board vote 2/23/22.</p> <p>Email notice to school sent 2/14/24. Public posting 2/21/24. Withdraw opportunity by 2/19/24. Board vote 2/28/24</p>		<p>Q: My authorizer provided my school's renewal/nonrenewal recommendation via writing... 7 Agree</p>	Y

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

<p>Standard (5-year) renewal terms are only granted to schools that met established performance expectations outlined in the charter contract.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> 5-year terms are standard for meeting expectations in CPF. Though some schools have received varied renewal extensions. 1-year extensions for COVID. Short term renewals for SLAM and Cirrus in 2024. Pataula Charter Academy will have an automatic 5-year extension if criteria are met, functioning as a 10-year term.</p>	<p>The SCSC clearly noted reasons around school performance that resulted in shorter contract terms - SLAM Academy of Atlanta (2 years) and Cirrus (3 year). For SLAM, the SCSC spoke to their strong start, implications of a facilities change (enrollment, funding, staff turnover) and the recent uptick in performance that ultimately resulted in a shorter term renewal in hopes that the positive trend continues with performance.</p> <p>SCSC is currently drafting guidance around the criteria for renewal terms, included short-term renewal and renewals over 5 years. This is already planned to be incorporated in future renewal guidance.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Y</p>
<p>Recommendations include a detailed, objective and evidence-based explanation for the decision.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> See Evaluator Comments for staff feedback that illustrates this.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p>	<p>Q: A detailed, objective and evidence-based explanation for the decision was... 7 Agree</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Y</p>
<p>The authorizer uses policy or procedure to ensure individuals involved in the renewal decision are free from conflicts of interest.</p>	<p><b>Met.</b> Conflict of Interest Policy <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p>	<p>Q: I believe the renewal process was free from conflicts of interest 7 Agreed</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Y</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Needs Improvement</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Adequate</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Exemplary</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Rating</p>
<p>Number of Criteria Met:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">0-1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2-3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EX</b></p>
<p>Evaluator Comments: N/A</p>				
<p><b>Advanced Criteria</b></p>		<p><b>Strengths</b></p>		<p><b>Areas of Growth</b></p>
<p><u>Expansion and Replication</u> The authorizer evaluates the prior performance of existing schools and the organization's capacity to grow in making expansion or replication decisions.</p>	<p>Expansion is a noted objective within SCSC's larger strategic plan. In the FY24 renewals, SCSC specifically notes for the schools that were awarded an expansion, that it is tied to this objective.</p>	<p>Within the renewal recommendation for the International Charter Academy of Georgia (ICAG), SCSC notes that an expansion was awarded due to meeting standards in all sections of the CPF for the three most recent years. It will be helpful for the SCSC to incorporate language within the</p>		

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

		renewal guidance that speaks to how schools can be awarded expansion and replication as part of the renewal process.
--	--	--

<b>Standard 15. Closure.</b> In the event of school closure, either at the conclusion of the charter term or during the charter term, the authorizer oversees and ensures the school governing board and leadership carry out a detailed closure protocol that includes the provisions outlined in the charter contract, such as ensuring timely notification to parents; orderly transition of students and student records to new schools; and disposition of school funds, property, and assets in accordance with law, rule and contract terms.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer has a written policy for termination procedures that ensures timely notification to parents, orderly transition of students and student records to new schools, disposition of school funds, property, and assets in accordance with law and effectively implements policy in the event of a school closure.	<b>Met.</b> SCSC <a href="#">Closure Guidance</a> provides timelines and outlines specific tasks to be completed related to the relevant closure procedures. In addition to the guide, SCSC also provides sample family communication and an FAQ sheet for parents and staff.	Have experienced 2 recent closures. SCSC is exploring what other authorizers might for re: closure, especially when a school closes for financial reasons. Collection of student records can be cumbersome. Working with schools to digitize records.	N/A	Y
	Needs Improvement	Adequate	Exemplary	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0	1		AD

## Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Evaluator Comments: N/A		
Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
<p>The authorizer has a plan that establishes clear roles and responsibilities with required steps for the orderly closure of a school. The authorizer provides support for transition of students to other schools.</p>	<p><a href="#">Closure guidance</a> includes both steps/timelines for school closure tasks, as well as the SCSC responsibility for each task. Color codes are used to indicate tasks that are general and those that are specific to specific stakeholders/topics: parents/students, employees, finances, and inventory/facilities.</p>	<p>SCSC noted the pain points around closure procedures extending beyond the termination of the charter.</p> <p>The closures of Fulton and Cherokee have more clearly identified needs around student records management following a closure decision. In addition, SCSC noted the financial implications of a closure.</p>