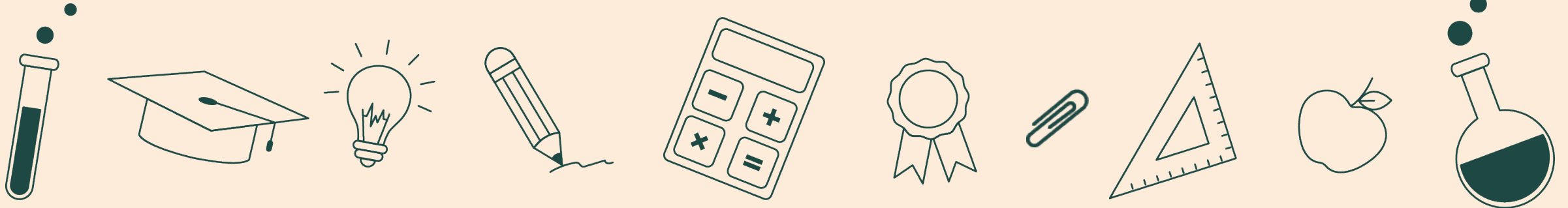




SCSC Petitioner Bootcamp

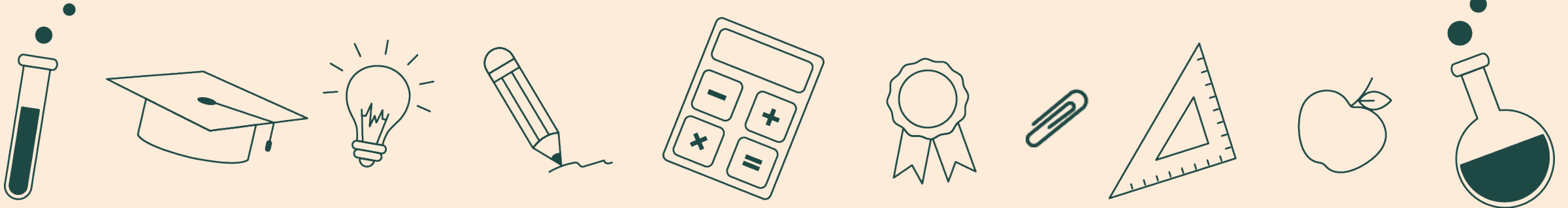




Welcome

Kristen Easterbrook
Director of New Schools

State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia



Vision

Innovative and superior charter schools advancing education in every community.

Mission

The mission of the State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia is to improve public education by authorizing high-quality charter schools that provide students with better educational opportunities than they would otherwise receive in traditional district schools.



Agenda



9:30 a.m. – Welcome

9:35 a.m. – Petition Process Overview

10:30 a.m. – Local Submission Process

10:45 a.m. – Fiscal Feasibility

11:30 a.m. – Board Overview and Building Capacity

12:00 p.m. – Lunch Break

12:30 p.m. – Operating as an LEA

1:15 p.m. – Academic Program

2:00 p.m. – Planning for Pre-Opening During the Petitioning Phase

2:30 p.m. – Conclusion



Other Petitioner Webinars



Petitions Platform and Budget Webinar

- November 7, 2024, from 10:00am-11:30am
 - Reviews how to access the petitions portal
 - Answers common troubleshooting questions
 - Provides an overview of the petition budget template

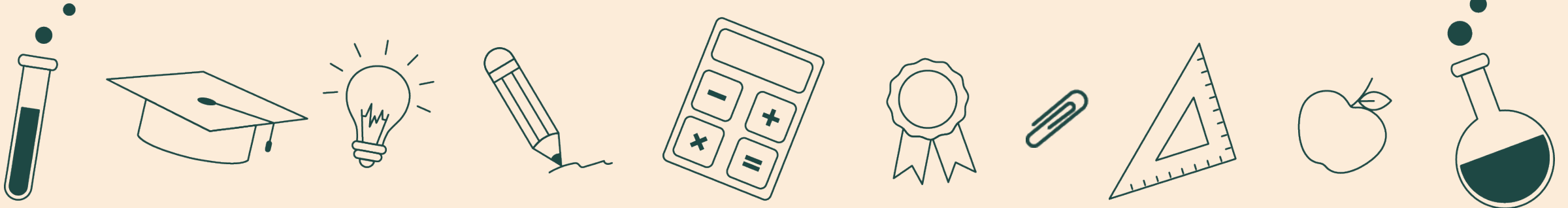




Petition Review Process

Kristen Easterbrook
Director of New Schools

State Charter Schools Commission
Of Georgia



Presentation Overview



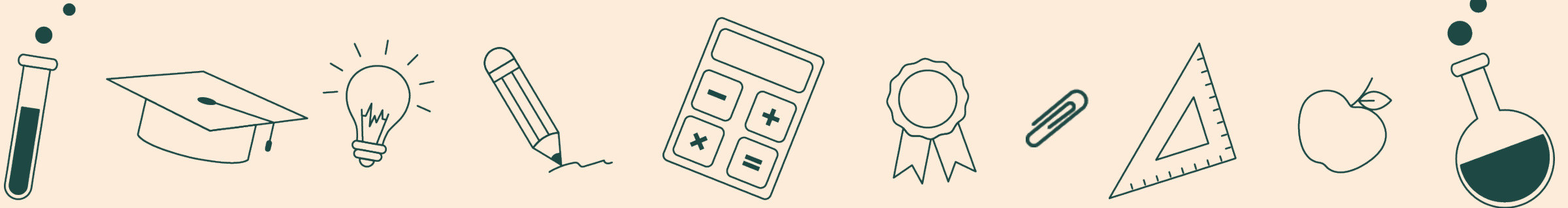
- Charter School Basics
- Petition Process Overview
- Attendance Zones
- Petition Priorities





Charter School Basics

State Charter Schools Commission
Of Georgia



What is a Charter School?

- A Public school
- Authorized by and subject to a Charter Contract
- Flexibility from certain educational laws in exchange for increased accountability for student achievement

Flexibility Waiver



Organizations Eligible to Apply

ELIGIBLE

- Registered nonprofit corporation (Georgia's Nonprofit Code)

NOT ELIGIBLE

- Home Study Programs or Schools
- Sectarian Schools
- Religious Schools
- Private-for-profit schools
- Private educational institutions not established, operated, or governed by the State of Georgia
- Existing private schools



Who Can (and Cannot) be on your Board?

Nonprofit corporations must have at least 3 board directors. O.C.G.A. 14-3-803(a).

Governing Board members must:

- (A) Must be a United States citizen;
- (B) Must be a resident of Georgia; and
- (C) Must not be an employee of the state charter school.

Governing Board members CANNOT :

- Be an officer or serve on the board of directors of any organization that sells goods or services to that state charter school; or
- Be an officer, member, or executive-level employee of a local board of education or an employee of a local school system from the region the school serves.

O.C.G.A. 20-2-2084



Georgia Charter School Authorizers

State Board of Education
&
Local Board of Education

Locally
Approved
Charter School

State Charter Schools
Commission

State Charter
School



Role of a Charter School Authorizer?

YES

Approve schools

Set academic, finance and operational expectations

Monitor school performance

Hold schools accountable for legal requirements

NO

Dictate how schools meet performance goals

Act as an appellate entity for school-level decisions

Provide services for students

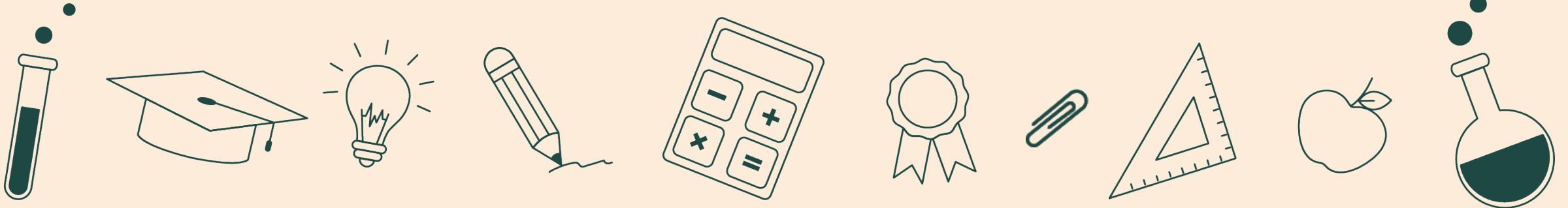
Set the school's board policy





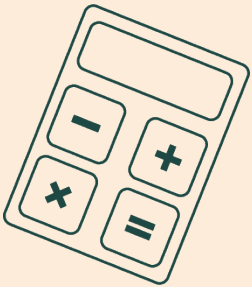
Petition Process Overview

State Charter Schools Commission
Of Georgia



State Charter School Petitions

- REQUEST to be approved to operate a taxpayer-funded school to educate Georgia's children.
- NOT a guaranteed approval.
- Consider the petition a formal business proposal.



FY25 Start-up Petition Timeline





SCSC Electronic Submission Portal

- Petitions must be submitted through the online SMAppl Portal. SCSC will not consider petitions submitted via any other method.
- In November, SCSC staff will host a webinar to familiarize applicants with the SMAppl system.

SCSC Petition Contents

Narrative

Budget
Template

Required
Appendices

*Examples: Concurrent
Submission, Nonprofit
Registration, Community
Engagement documentation,
Conflict of Interest forms, etc*

SCSC Petition Review Process



Legal Compliance and Budget Screen



- Adherence to state and federal laws applicable to the petition and charter school operations. General budget compliance requirements.
- Petitioners will be notified, in writing, if their submission fails to meet requirements.
- Deficiencies may be remedied in a revised petition in a subsequent petition cycle.



Substantive Review

- Consistency with state education goals, including enhancing public educational opportunities to meet the growing and diverse needs of students and to provide the highest academic quality to increase student achievement and positive outcomes.
- In-depth budget analysis and examination of funding sources, business partnerships, facilities, and any other operational aspect of the school.

Capacity Interview



- Interview panel composed of SCSC staff, Commissioners, and experts
- The focus of the interview relates to the governing board and school leadership's capacity to operate a charter school that is consistent with state education goals, and to do so in a fiscally responsible manner that fosters a positive school environment.



SCSC Staff Recommendations & Board Vote

SCSC staff makes petition recommendations to the SCSC Board based on the interview panel's feedback, alignment with state educational goals, the SCSC strategic plan, and local district feedback.

Petitioners may withdraw from the petition process and SCSC staff will not present a recommendation to the SCSC board of commissioners.

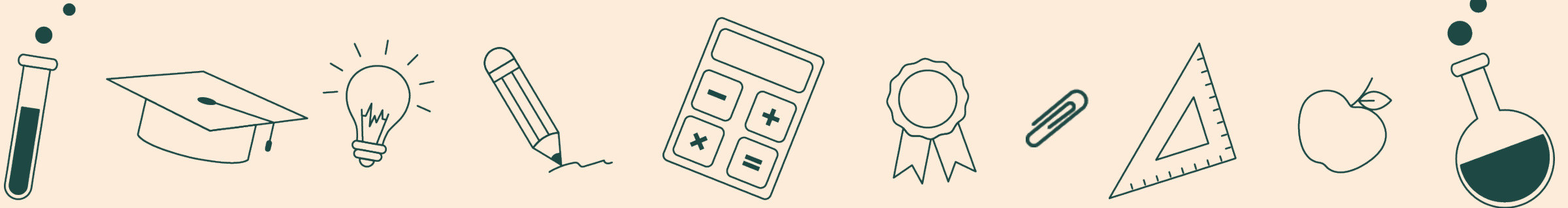
SCSC approvals are subject to State Board of Education review.





Attendance Zone

State Charter Schools Commission
of Georgia



Petitioners Must Select an Attendance Zone

Statewide Attendance Zone	Defined Attendance Zone
Demonstrate community interest in and a plan to recruit students from <u>a majority of the school districts in Georgia</u> . If the petition is approved, the school must accept enrollment of students from any local school system in Georgia.	Demonstrate community interest and a plan to recruit students from <u>less than a majority of Georgia school districts</u> . If the petition is approved, the school may only accept enrollment of students from the local school systems in its attendance zone.



REQUIRED:

- Documentation of community interest to support the selected attendance zone. *Failure to do so may result in withdrawal of your petition.*
- Must reflect the location of stakeholders relevant to local school systems (zip code, county, etc.)
- Letters of Support
- Intent to Enroll
- Pre-enrollment Forms
- Signed Petitions
- Meeting sign-in sheets



Concurrent Submissions



- You MUST concurrently submit your petition to a local board(s) of education. (One Exception: Fully virtual schools with a statewide attendance zone.)
- *How* to concurrently submit is based on attendance zone.
- SCSC petitions MUST include documentation of concurrent submission compliance.
- Petitions without sufficient evidence that concurrent submission requirements are met will be removed from consideration.



DEFINED Attendance Zone

A petition with a defined attendance zone must be submitted to:

- the local board(s) of education where the school is proposed to locate **FOR ACTION**; and,
- to each local school district from which the proposed school plans to enroll students for informational purposes.

SCSC cannot vote to approve or deny your petition unless and until the local board of education denies it.



What qualifies as a “local denial” so SCSC can act on your *Defined Attendance Zone* petition?

Denial

- Local board votes to deny your petition;
- Local board fails to act on your petition within 90 days of submission and you did not request an extension to give the local board additional time; or
- An extension of additional time expired and the local board has not acted.

No Denial

- Local board approves your petition;
- The local board rejects or withdraws your petition because it failed to adhere to the board’s technical requirements, process or deadlines; or
- You failed to work with the local board in good faith seeking approval.

Certification of Local Board Denial



- Petitioners with a defined attendance zone must submit a Certification of Local Board Denial for SCSC to act on your petition.
- Submitting a Certification does not guarantee SCSC will act on your petition by a certain date. Factors affecting when SCSC acts on a petition include, but are not limited to, whether the petitioner and local board appear to still be working through the petition review process despite no formal extension past 90 days.

**CERTIFICATION OF
LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION DENIAL**

Use of this Form: A petitioner proposing a defined attendance zone to the State Charter Schools Commission (SCSC) must submit its petition for action to the local board of education (LBOE) where the school plans to locate. Per O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2084, the SCSC cannot act on the petition until the LBOE denies the petition or fails to act on the petition within 90 days, unless the petitioner requested an extension. The petitioner must submit this completed form to the SCSC as evidence of LBOE denial.

A. School Name: _____

B. LBOE to which Petitioner Submitted its Petition for Action: _____

C. LBOE's Established Petition Submittal Deadline:¹ _____

D. Select One:

☐ LBOE Denied the Petition on _____ (date). *Attach a copy of the Board Meeting Summary or Minutes.*

☐ 90 days have passed since the LBOE's Petition Submittal Deadline and (i) the LBOE has not approved or denied the Petition and (ii) the School has not requested an extension for the LBOE to approve or deny the Petition².

☐ An extension of time for the LBOE to approve or deny the Petition² has expired and the School has not requested another extension.

E. Certification

I certify that the information provided herein is true and correct and that I have worked through the local petition process in good faith seeking approval. I acknowledge that the SCSC has discretion when to act on my petition and that the submission of this form does not guarantee that the SCSC will act on my petition at any specific time. Furthermore, I understand that the SCSC recommendation on my petition may be a denial and SCSC is not responsible for any impact on my locally submitted petition due to my decision not to request an extension from the LBOE.

Signature _____ Printed Name _____ Date _____



Petition Contents

The concurrent submission filed with the applicable local board petition must be *substantively* the same as the petition submitted to the SCSC.



STATEWIDE Attendance Zone

A petitioner that selects a statewide attendance zone must submit its petition to the local board of education where the school is proposed to locate *for informational purposes only*.

Exception:

Schools with a statewide attendance zone that will only provide virtual instruction do not need to submit a petition to any local board of education.

Do I need to submit my petition to a Local Board of Education (LBOE)?

What type of attendance zone will your school have?

Statewide Attendance Zone

Defined Attendance Zone

Will your school offer virtual instruction ONLY?

Yes

No

✓ No submission to a LBOE required.

❗ Submit full petition to LBOE where school will be located for informational purposes only.

Will your attendance zone include a single district or multiple districts?

Single District

Multiple District

❗ Submit to the LBOE where the school will be located.

❗ Submit full petition to LBOE where school will be located.

AND

❗ Submit full petition for informational purposes only to each LBOE from which the school will draw students.



For more information about the State Charter School Commission's petition process, visit:
www.scsc.georgia.gov.

Concurrent Submission Timing

(I) If you are submitting a petition to a Local Board of Education *for action*:

Submit your petition to the local board according to its deadlines for a 2026-27 school year opening.

- If the local deadline comes before the SCSC deadline, submit your local petition by the local deadline & include evidence of the submission in your SCSC petition.
- If the local deadline falls after the SCSC deadline, upload evidence of the deadline with your SCSC petition. Email SCSC evidence once you submit a petition to the local board.
- If you cannot locate any local board published deadlines, contact the local board to confirm its process. *Note, local board petition processes are subject to State Board of Education Rules. Contact Office of Charter School Compliance for more information.*

(II) If you are submitting a petition to a Local Board of Education *for informational purposes only*:

Because you are only submitting for informational purposes, submit the petition to the local board at the same time as your SCSC petition and include submission evidence in the SCSC petition.

Local Board Timelines

- Local petition timelines can affect a petitioner's SCSC timeline, including its pre-opening year if approved.
- Petitioners must understand all implications of the local timeline.
- **KNOW:** If the local board will not act on your petition in 90 days, you must decide whether to offer the local board additional time!

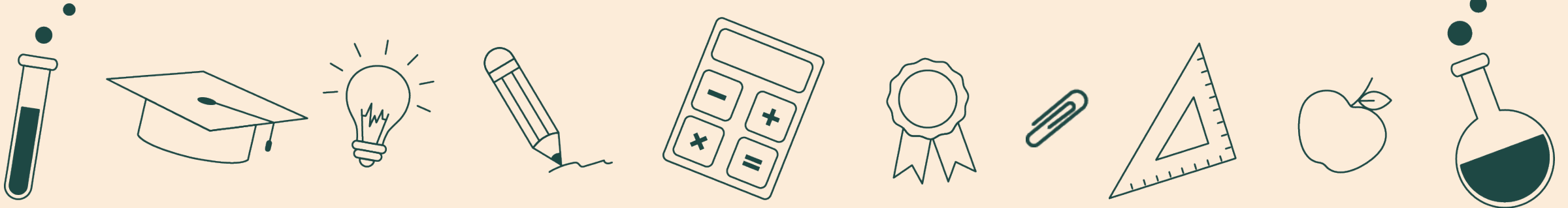
Consider!

- The local process may end if you do not grant the local board additional time. Meaning, if the SCSC thereafter recommends denial (*you will not know the SCSC recommendation when deciding whether to offer additional time*), the result is no local or state approval this cycle.
- However, granting additional time would delay a SCSC approval & pre-opening year.



FY25 Petition Priorities

State Charter Schools Commission
Of Georgia



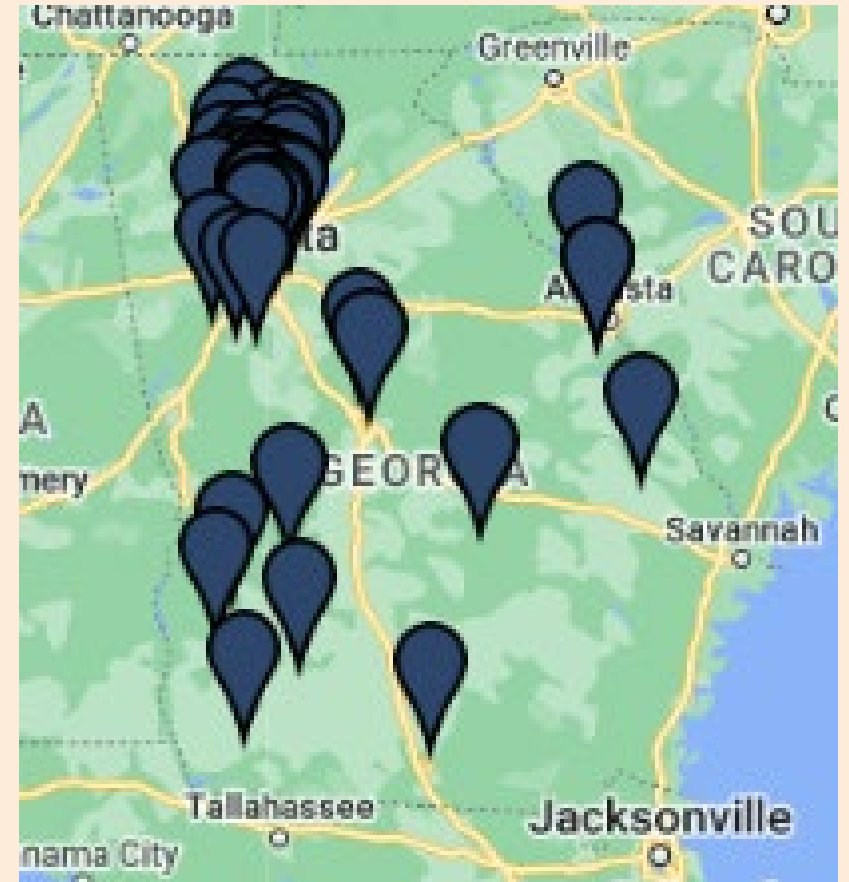


SCSC Strategic Plan: Growing a Brighter Future

State charter schools are heavily concentrated in the metro-Atlanta area and relatively sparse or nonexistent in other areas of the state.

Objective 1: Increase charter school choice in communities with few or no options.

Objective 2: Expand high-quality middle and high charter school choice



FY25 Priority Areas

“Priority Area” is a location more than five miles* from any operational charter school authorized to serve all or some of the same grade band(s) as the petitioner’s proposed school.

**direct route, not driving distance*

Approved schools located in a priority area **MUST** locate and serve students in the priority area its first year.





Non-Priority Area Petitions

- The SCSC will accept petitions for schools that plan to locate and serve non-priority areas.
- To ensure sufficient resources can be allocated to charter growth in areas with limited educational options, the SCSC *may deny charter applications solely based on location.*

Operational Charter School Map

As a resource for charter petitioners, the SCSC will provide a map of all operational charter schools in Georgia.

- Search a specific location (address) in relation to operational charter schools.
- Can add layers to explore:
 - Charter schools (state and local) by grades served
 - A five-mile radius around each operational charter school.
 - School-level CCRPI Content Mastery scores
 - School-age population
- Petitioners must independently verify locations of existing charter schools.

The SCSC is not responsible for the accuracy of the information in this tool.



Questions



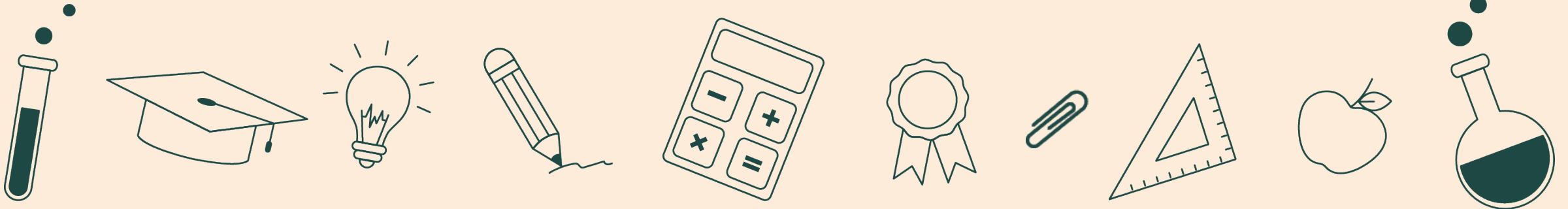


Local Submission Process

Allen Mueller

Senior Director, Office of Charter School Compliance

State Charter Schools Commission
Of Georgia



Presentation Overview



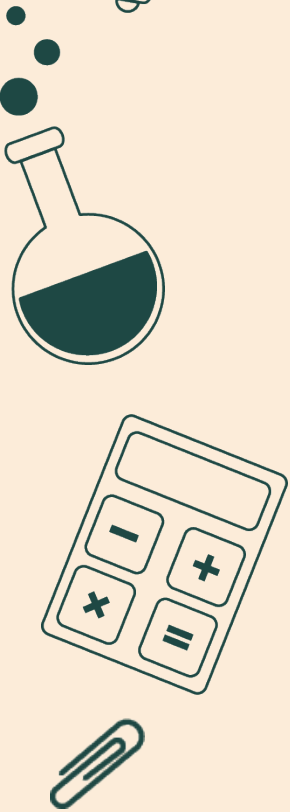
- Background and Context
- Letter of Intent Submission
- Local Petition Submission
- Local Petition Evaluation
- OCSC or SCSC Submission



Background and Context

OCSC is the administrative arm of the State Board for locally-approved charter schools, promulgating guidance, providing support for districts, schools, and applicants, issuing charter contracts and creating and publishing the state charter petition and related documents used by districts in their local petition processes.

OCSC previously operated as the Office of District Flexibility and Charter Schools under GaDOE, but moved under the SCSC and rebranded as OCSC on June 30, 2024 with the passage of House Bill 318.



Step One: Letter of Intent (LOI) Submission

Submit your Letter of Intent (State Board Rule 160-4-9-.05):

- At least 6 months prior to petition submission
- Simultaneously to the local district and OCSC
- Using the template from the OCSC website



Letter of Intent (LOI) Submission

Possible Roadblocks

District has no posted application process

District won't acknowledge receipt of LOI

District won't respond to me

District obfuscates

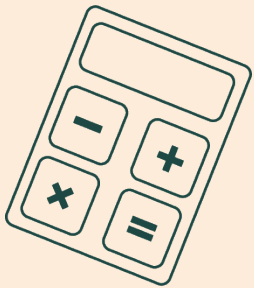
Possible Solutions

Check for a board policy

Dually submit to OCSC

Reach out to OCSC

Reach out to OCSC

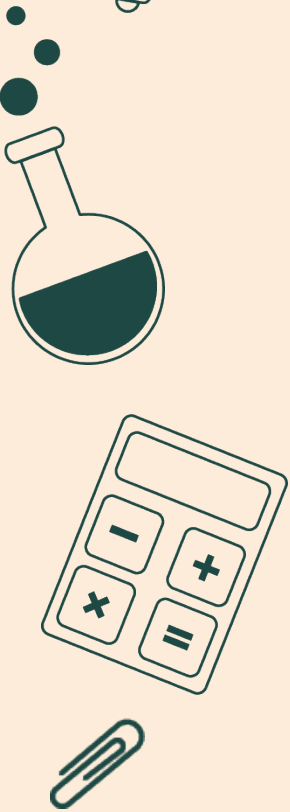


Letter of Intent (LOI) Submission

In the absence of evidence to the contrary, consider sending the LOI with a cover letter asking the following:

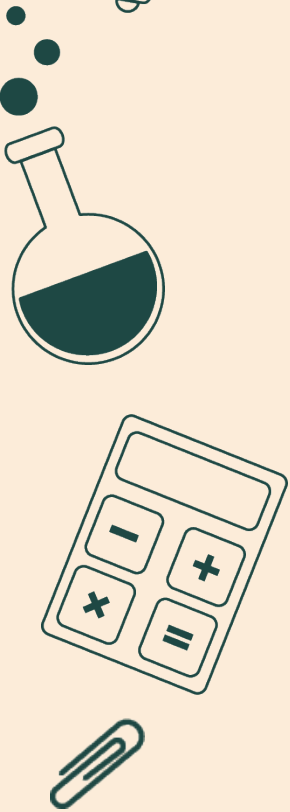
1. Where can I find your board charter school policy?
2. When is your application/petition due date?
3. Are you using the state petition without additions, or with additions?
4. Who will be my designated contact person through this process?

Fun Fact: The LOI requirement can be waived if all parties agree



Step Two: Completed Petition Submission

1. Follow local directions for submitting your petition, dually submitting to OCSC. Note that OCSC has moved to a paperless process
2. Triple-check that all parts of the petition are complete, present, and in the requested format(s)
3. Ask the district for a written receipt verifying completeness.
4. Verify that OCSC has also received a petition copy



Completed Petition Submission

Possible Roadblocks

District gives unclear directions for submission

District doesn't acknowledge receipt of petition

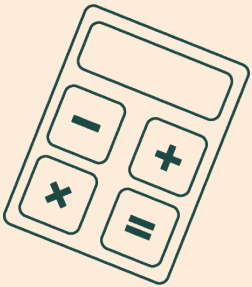
District Says petition is incomplete, won't accept

Possible Solutions

Reach out to OCSC

Dually submit to OCSC

Ask for a written rejection letter and reach out to OCSC

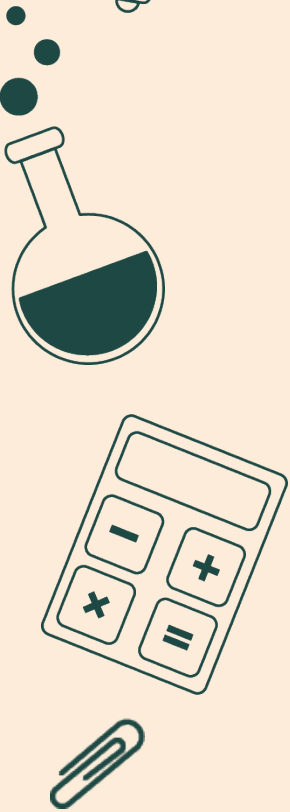


Step Three: Petition Evaluation

Once the petition has been received the local board has 90 days to vote on it in a public meeting, unless the district asks for revisions, which may extend the response window up to an additional 90 days.

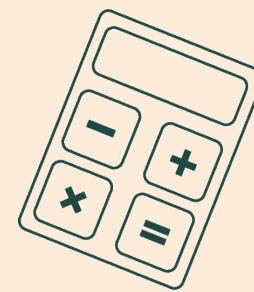
State Board Rule 160-4-9-.05(1)(b)(4) requires districts to place petitions in one of four groups, and to notify applicants of their “group.”

Fun fact: Only petitioners have the ability to extend the district’s review window beyond 90 days.



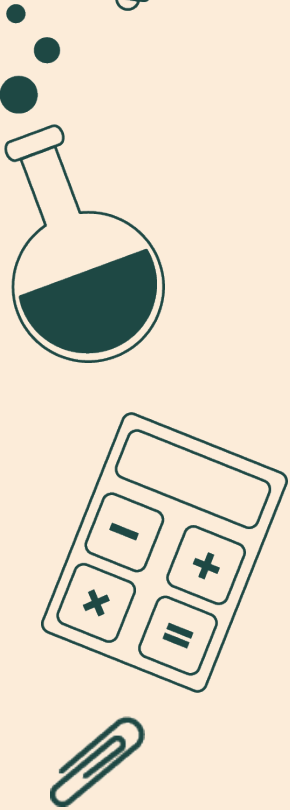
Petition Evaluation

Review Group	Consequence(s)
Rejection	Rejection; letter detailing insufficiencies
Revision	One opportunity to revise and resubmit within 30 days (with petitioner request)
Clarification	One opportunity to revise and resubmit within 30 days (with petitioner request)
Approval	Approval



Petition Evaluation

After receipt of petition, but prior to board action, the district must interview, or meet with, charter applicants. Information shared during this meeting may play a role in the district's decision to approve or reject a petition.



Step Four: OCSC or SCSC Submission

If locally **denied**, the local district has 60 days to provide a detailed list of reasons for denial. Please be sure that OCSC and SCSC get a copy of those reasons. A local denial is needed in order to proceed with the SCSC submission process.

If locally **approved**, the approved petition must be submitted to OCSC, including:

1. Any intervening correspondence between the petitioner and the local district
2. Any material added by the local district to the OCSC petition and your responses to that additional material
3. Documentation of local board approval

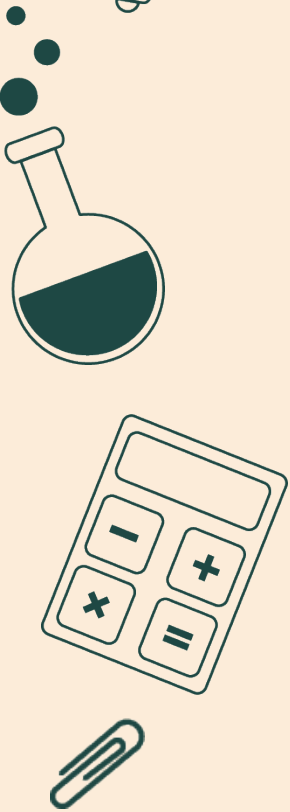


OCSC or SCSC Submission

After receiving the final, approved petition and requested documents, OCSC will schedule a capacity interview with locally-approved applicants. This interview will focus on the board's capacity to implement petition, but also on the applicant's progress since initial submission of the petition. After the interview, OCSC will take one of three steps:

1. Request additional information from the applicant
2. Make a recommendation to the State Board of Education for denial of the petition
3. Make a recommendation to the State Board of Education for approval of the petition

If the OCSC recommends approval of a locally-approved petition, it will issue a draft charter contract, the terms of which must be accepted by all three contract parties before the recommendation can be brought to the SBOE.



Resources

Consider reviewing the following documents before beginning work on a local charter petition:

Georgia Charter School Statute

State Board Rules

Petition documents

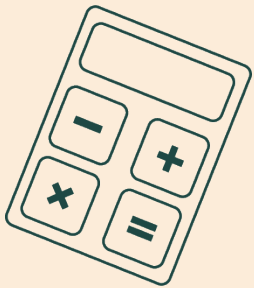
An approved local charter petition

OCSC Website

OCSC Website

OCSC Website

OCSC Staff



Questions





Petition Best Practices

Budget & Financials

Carmen Freemire, Senior Director of Finance

Budget Template Overview

Keep Formatted
in Excel

Do not modify
the format

Two Templates to
Submit

Petitioners must submit
2 budgets:
100% & 65%

Use FY25 Budget
Template in the
application portal

Do not add rows or
columns to the
template. Doing this
will affect the linkages
within the spreadsheet
and make it unusable

Complete all tabs

Instructions

Read First and Thoroughly!

Budget Template

You will build your school budget using this template.

Staffing Plan

Allows you to align positions in petition to positions in the budget template.

Cash Balances- Be Positive

Ending cash balance MUST be positive each year.

Cash Flow Proj Planning Year

Cash Flow Proj Year 1

Cash Flow Proj Year 2

Initial Review Deficiencies

Budget deficiencies may be corrected according to the Budget Cure Policy. All other deficiencies must be corrected in a subsequent petition cycle.

Budget Cure Policy

Eligible Deficiencies:

- Wrong Template
- Incomplete Tabs
- Unsubstantiated Additional Revenue

Cure Parameters:

- Petitioners advised of deficiencies on March 19, 2025.
- Remedied documentation must be provided in 2 business days.

Budget Template

Plans = Costs

The plans outlined in the petition will have costs associated with it

Make sure the details of the plans in the petition are detailed as costs in the budget

The details in the petition must be reflected in the costs each fiscal year of the budget

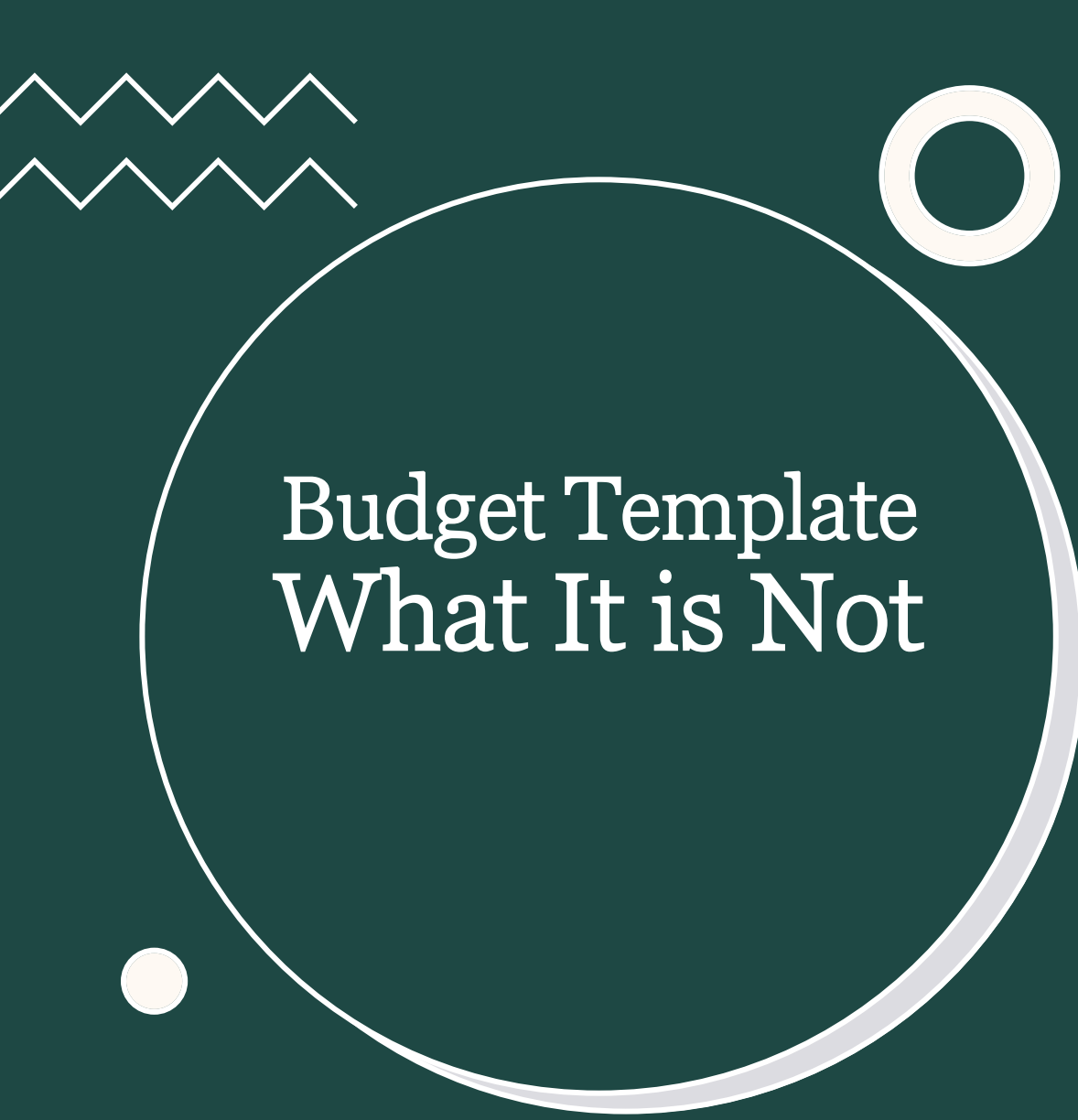
The petition and the budget together are a business plan and illustrate the financial viability of the school



Budget Template What It is

- Example of a budget a school might use given specific circumstances and information.
- Demonstrates an understanding of school funding: potential revenues, anticipated expenses, cash flow planning, etc.
- Demonstrates prudent decision making.
- Explains how the plans outlined in the petition would be operationalized in a functioning financial framework.





Budget Template What It is Not

A complete picture of what actual funding of the school will be when it is operating.



Common Budget Errors & Concerns

Revenue

- ✗ Overestimating student enrollment.
Don't force enrollment numbers to support the costs in the budget.
- ✗ Over estimating training and experience of teachers which earns a school more revenue when most new schools have difficulty attracting teachers with many years of experience.
- ✗ Including unguaranteed revenue without proper documentation (e.g. grant award letter).
Only include funds your school has been awarded.

Common Budget Errors & Concerns

Expenses

- ✗ Underestimating personnel costs.
- ✗ Underestimating facilities costs.
Try to keep it at 15% of the total budget.
- ✗ Not including costs for renovations and maintenance.
- ✗ Academic program expenses in petition not supported by budget.
- ✗ Not including an expense without explanation (e.g. donated student furniture).
- ✗ Allocating expenditures inappropriately (e.g. expenses are the same every month).



School Budget Cannot be in Deficit

01

Verify that your budget template is showing a positive cash flow by year's end.

02

Make sure the details in your school's petition are detailed as costs in the budget. This will affect your monthly cash flow.

03

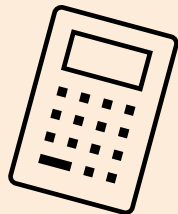
Submit an operational budget not an approvable budget.

There is no one right budget that applies to every school's situation.

If Outsourcing Services



Research actual market rates for services such as janitorial, lawn care, payroll, Education Service Provider, or other administrative services.



Make sure to include these costs in the budget template.

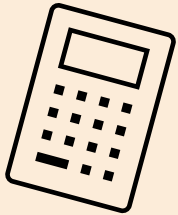




Facilities – Budget Considerations

Reasonable estimates with supporting documentation

Best practice – do not exceed 15% of total expenses.



65% budget

Remember certain costs and overhead are fixed.



Renovation/constructions costs.

Education Service Provider Contracts



Clearly explains who is responsible for financial and operational management of the school and how these duties will be fulfilled.



Demonstrates clear delineation in the roles of the Governing Board and the ESP.



Clearly outlines how much the ESP fees will be and how they will be paid.

Items to Include

Education Service Provider



It is clear the Governing Board reviewed documentation to determine the financial health of its chosen ESP.



A copy of a recent corporate annual report or audited financial statements for the ESP are included with the petition.



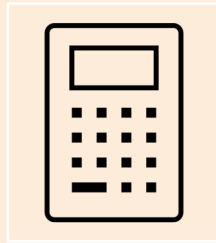
It is clear the Governing Board reviewed financial performance data of other schools an ESP may also work with.

Items to Include

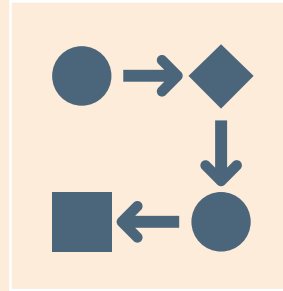
Great Budget Responses Include



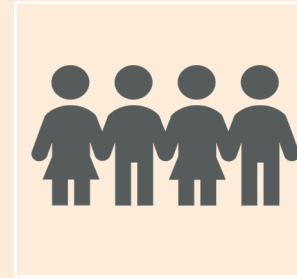
Governing Board
understands its
Fiduciary Duty



Market rates
researched when
determining costs
for goods and
services



Understanding of
how data
reporting affects
revenue

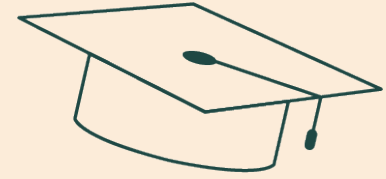


A robust and
well-designed
enrollment plan



Demonstrates an
understanding of school
funding – potential
revenues, anticipated
expenses, cash flow
planning

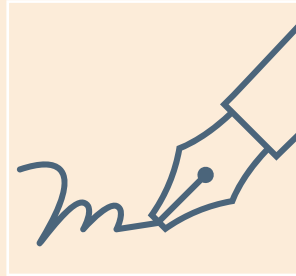
Great Budget Responses Include



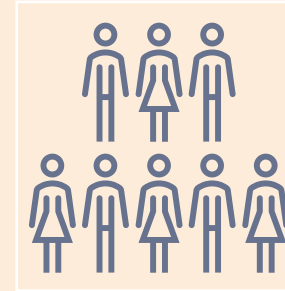
A financial narrative that matches the budget plan for implementing LEA obligations



Draft documents with proposed leases and purchase agreements



Demonstrates understanding of the financial arrangements that may be made with potential service providers



A staffing plan that includes the cost of salaries and benefits



A staffing plan that demonstrates understanding of teacher compensation

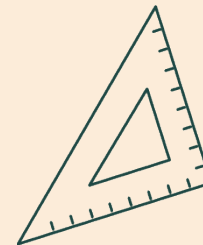
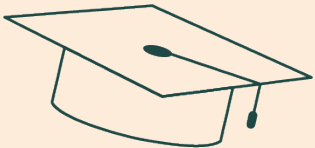
Questions





Board Overview & Building Capacity

Erin Wright
SCSC General Counsel





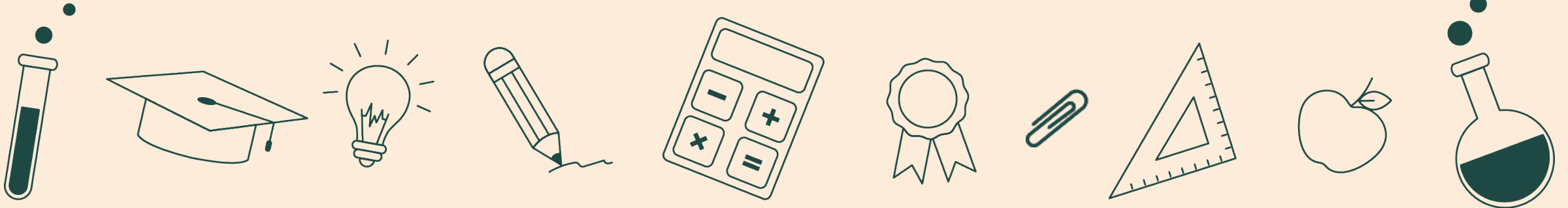
Overview

- Definitions
- Expectations
- Fiduciary Duties
- Conflicts of Interest
- Experience & Capacity





What is a “governing board?”



Governing Board

- The governing board of the non-profit organization that applies to the SCSC to operate a state charter school.
- The governing board is involved in school-level governance of the state charter school.

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2062(3.1); 20-2- 2081(4)





School Level Governance

School-level governance means “decision-making authority in personnel decisions, financial decisions, curriculum and instruction, resource allocation, establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, and school operations.”

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2061 (12.1)



Oversight Obligations

- Employer
- LEA Oversight
- Operations
- Contracts
- Pre-Opening
- Open Records Act
- Open Meetings Act
- Transparency
- Training
- Conflicts of Interest
- Non-Profit Status

SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.06(2)

STRATEGIC THINKING

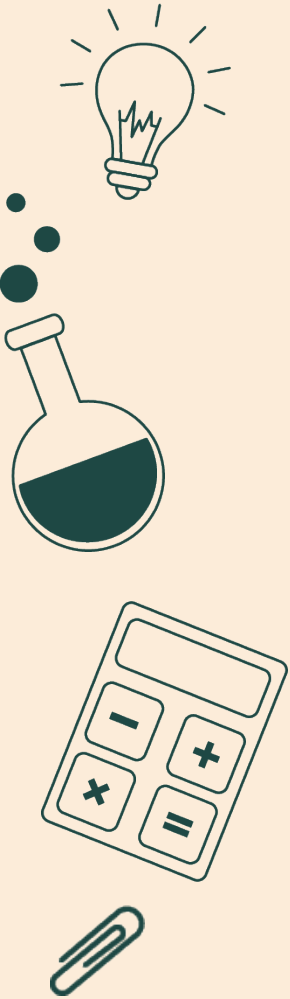
Charter Contract Requirements

- Set mission and vision
- Adopt policies
- Ensure legal, regulatory, and contractual compliance.
- Organizational planning
- Financial stability

- Act Autonomously
- Adhere to Bylaws
- Charter compliance
- Substantive operational control
- Monitor improvement goals
- Stakeholder communication
- School Leader oversight

ESP and Vendor Agreements

- Agreements should reflect due diligence aligned to fiduciary duties
- Agreements must uphold the board's obligation to oversee its vendors and to act autonomously.
- Agreements and partnerships must reflect the board's employment obligations for staff and to select, evaluate, and dismiss the school leader.
- Contracts and arrangements must reflect the board's obligation to oversee school finances, operations, and academics; to set the mission and vision of the school; and to adopt school policies.



Fiduciary Duties



A state charter school governing board has fiduciary duties to the school – its students, staff, and community. Each member of a state charter school governing board must independently exercise their judgment with **care, loyalty, and obedience**.



Conflicts-of-Interest

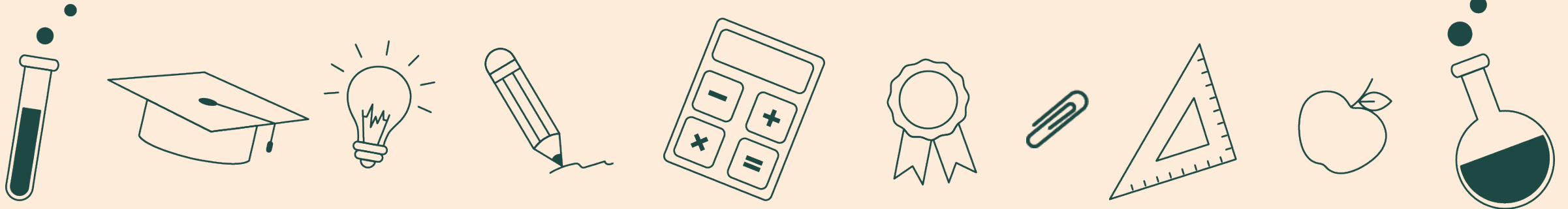
Governing board members **MUST NOT**:

- Act in an official capacity in any matter where the board member has a material financial interest that would reasonably be expected to impair objectivity;
- Solicit, accept, or knowingly accept something where there is an understanding that the item was offered to influence the board member's execution of their duties.
- Use their position (or information acquired exclusively by reason of their position, and which is not publicly known) for the purpose of securing financial gain.





Composition & Recruitment





Basic Requirements

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2084

The members of the governing board for the state charter school must:

- be United States citizens
- be Georgia residents
- not be employed by the state charter school
- not be an officer or serve on the board of directors for any organization that sells goods or services to the state charter school
- not be an officer, member, or employee of a local board of education or an employee of a local school system.



Board Transitions

- Succession Planning
- Term Limits (successive and/or overlapping)
- Founding Governing Board v. Operational Governing Board
- Founder-Governing Board Member v. School Leader/Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer

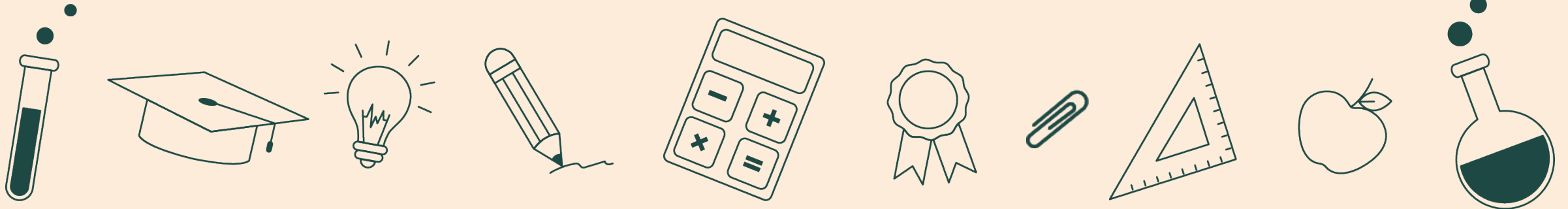


Questions





LUNCH



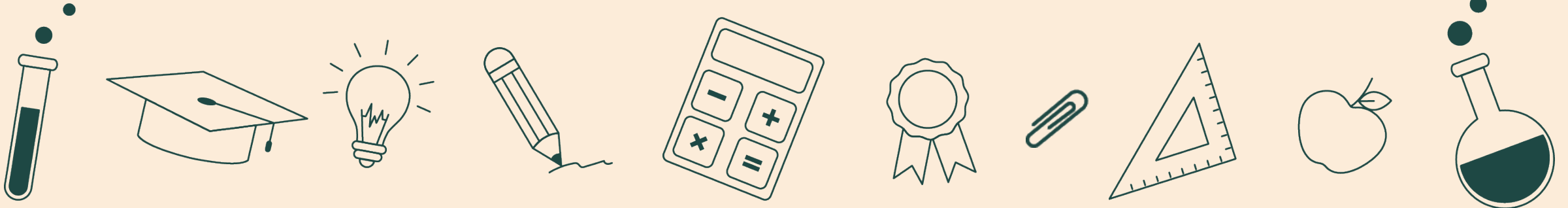


Operating as a Local Education Agency

Tiffany Leach

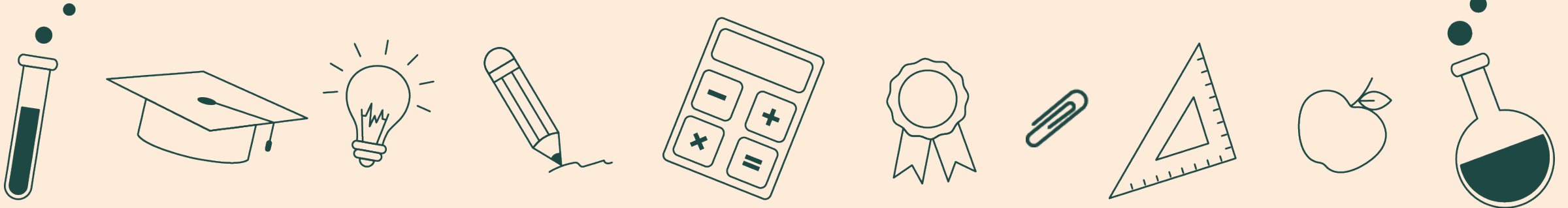
SCSC Sr. Associate General Counsel

State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia





Legal Overview



Local Education Agency

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2090

For administrative purposes, including data reporting, student enrollment counting procedures, student achievement reporting, funding allocations, and related purposes as defined by the State Board of Education (SBOE), each state charter school, including any students receiving education services through a state charter school shall, consistent with Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) rules and regulations, be treated as a single local education agency (LEA).



Locally Approved Charter Schools

- The charter school is authorized by a local board of education.
- The local board of education is the LEA for the school.
- The local district may manage the following:
 - LEA reporting obligations
 - Policy development
 - Handbooks
 - Funding
 - Special Education Services
 - English language learner services
 - Gifted services
 - Human resources and employer obligations

State Charter Schools

- State Charter Schools are their own LEA
- State charter schools manage *all* LEA responsibilities and are responsible for ensuring awareness of and compliance with all applicable legal, regulatory, and contractual obligations





Maximum Flexibility

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065

State Charter Schools have the flexibility to waive *some* state education law requirements and State Board of Education rules.





Not Waivable

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2065

Federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to:

- Civil Rights
- Insurance
- Protection of physical health & safety of students, employees, and visitors
- Conflict of interest transactions
- Prevention of unlawful conduct in or near a public school
- Required annual financial audits
- Single Statewide Accountability System requirements
- Student data and financial reporting requirements



Guidance

LEA Legal Obligations Guidance

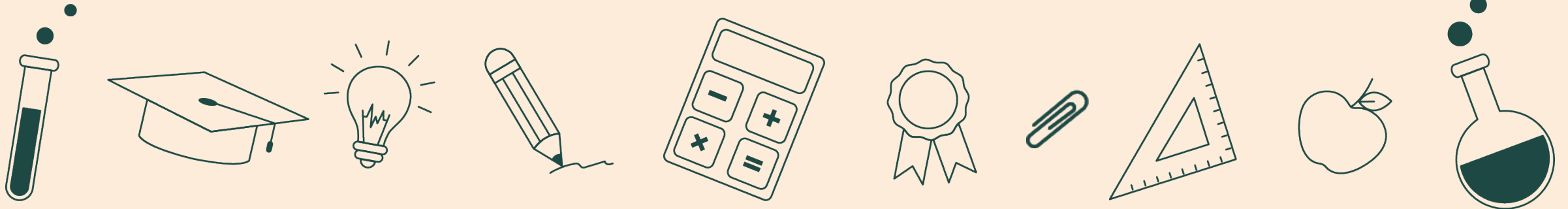
**School-Local Educational Agency
(LEA)**



**State Charter Schools Commission
of Georgia**



Federal Legal Obligations



Areas of Federal Legal Obligations

- Constitutional Rights
- Civil Rights Statutes
- Privacy and Student Records
- Federal Education Requirements



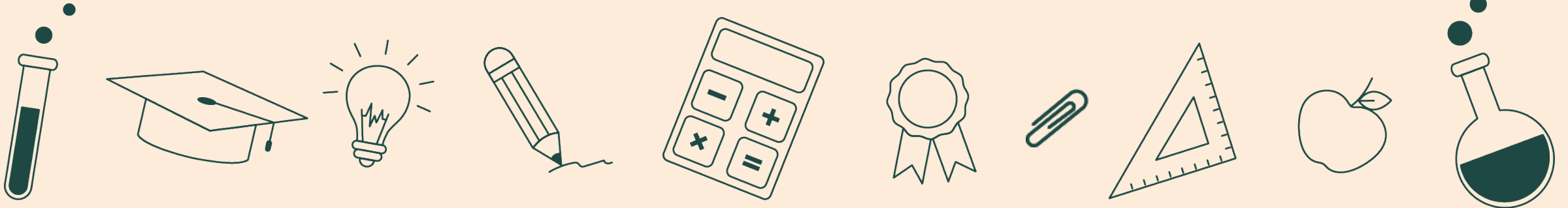
Federal Laws Directly Applicable to Schools and LEAs

- The Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Equal Educational Opportunities Act
- The Americans with Disabilities Act
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Title IX of the Education Amendments Act
- The Age Discrimination Act
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
- Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment
- Every Student Succeeds Act
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)





State Legal Obligations



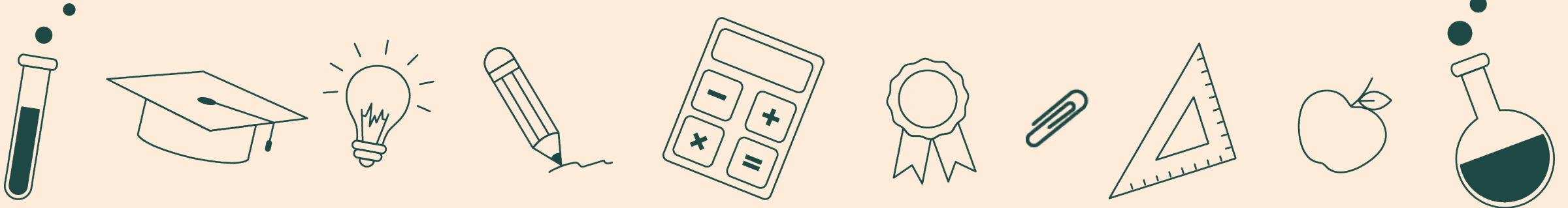
Areas of State Laws Applicable to State Charter Schools

- Open Enrollment
- Lottery Procedures
- Tuition and Fees
- Teachers- clearance certificates
- Teachers Retirement System
- Employee Evaluation (TKES and LKES)
- Annual Operating Budget Approval Requirements
- Student Discipline
- Health & Safety Laws
- School Facility Requirements





Assessment, Accountability, and Data Collections and Reporting



- Accountability
 - Single Statewide Accountability System
 - College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI)
- Assessments
 - Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills
 - Georgia Milestones
 - All students present must be tested
 - Testing personnel certification requirements
 - Appropriate testing window
- Data Collection and Reporting
 - Quality Basic Education Act Funding
 - Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Funding



GaDOE Data Reporting



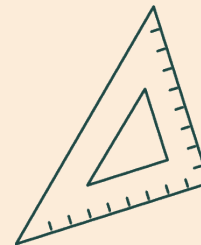
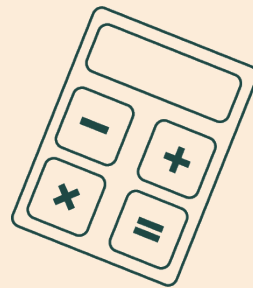
- Data Collection and Reporting
 - Quality Basic Education Act Funding
 - Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Funding
 - Certified/Classified Personnel Information (CPI)
 - Student Records
 - Pre-ID Labels (student-level data used to create state assessment identification labels)



Final Thoughts

- ✓ Understand the difference between a locally approved and state charter school
- ✓ Vet each aspect of the petition for legal compliance
- ✓ Utilize all available resources to ensure an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements of the proposed school's program and practice

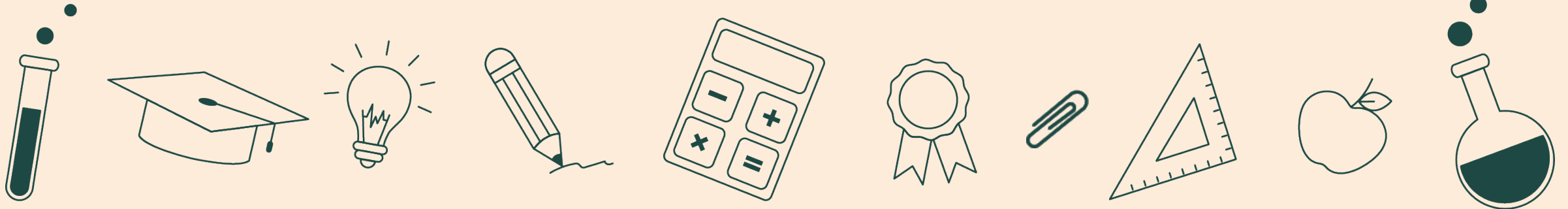






Academic Bootcamp for Petitioners

Henry Siebentritt, Academic Programs Evaluation Analyst

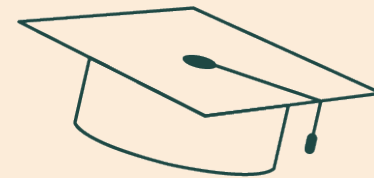




Overview

- Academic Accountability
- Academic Program
- Assessment Plan





Academic Accountability



SCSC Mission and Vision



Mission: To improve public education throughout the state by authorizing high-quality charter schools that provide students with better educational opportunities than they would otherwise receive in traditional district schools.

Vision: Innovative and superior charter schools advancing education in every community



Academic Accountability – CPF Metrics



Schools may satisfy annual academic requirements by outperforming their attendance zone in all relevant grade bands on at least one of the following measures:

- CCRPI Content Mastery,
- CCRPI Progress,
- CCRPI Grade Band Score,
- Value-Added Impact on Student Achievement



Accountability Comparisons based on Actual Enrollment

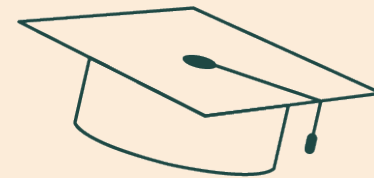
District Weighted Comparison Score

- For schools serving middle and high school grade bands, the school's score will be compared to a weighted score of proportion of students from the districts in which the charter school enrolls. Determined from the GaDOE Data Collections System of Residency Report.

School Weighted Comparison Score

- The school's score will be compared to a weighted score of proportion of students from the schools in which the charter school enrolls. Determined from GaDOE Data Collections Student Record Address Report.



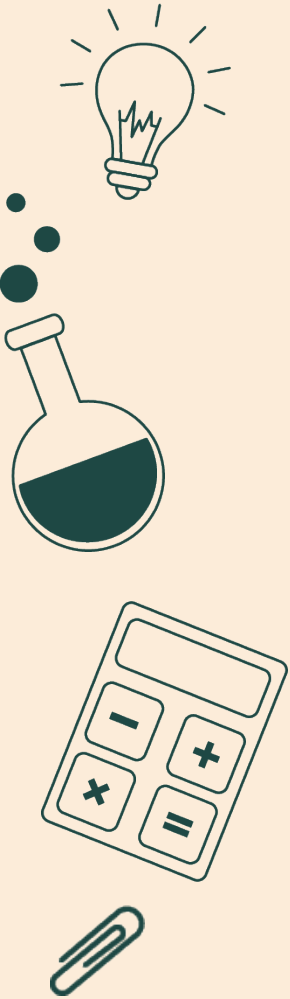


Academic Program



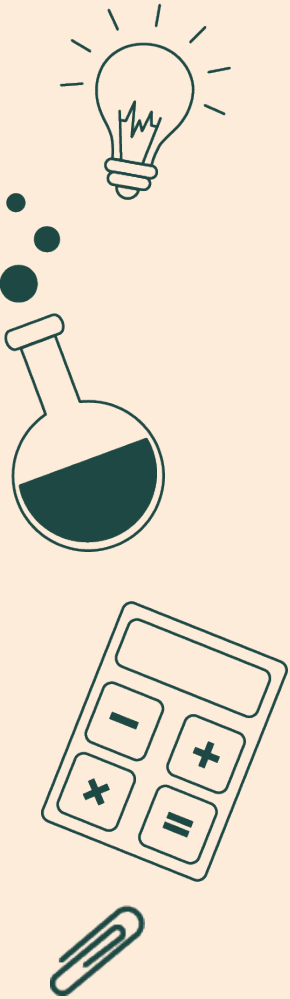
Academic Program Components

- Education Model
- Instructional Methods & Educational Practices
- Standards & Curriculum
- Assessment



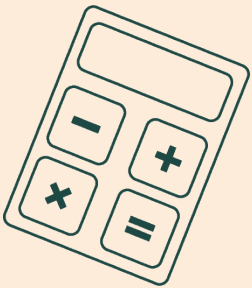
Education Model

- The overall approach to teaching and learning used in the charter school
 - Examples: STEM, Arts-Infused, Dual Language, College Prep, Project Based Learning
- SCSC is model agnostic and encourages innovation and flexibility.
- What does an exemplary response include?



Exemplary Response – Education Model

- Discussion of school's location and why this education model fits the needs of the community
- Reasons for the chosen model and what the school hopes to accomplish using this model
 - For example, your reasons could focus on the demographics of the area and the opportunities it will provide to students and families
 - *We suggest including at least three to five reasons
- Recognized research about the effectiveness of the chosen model



Instructional Methods and Educational Practices

Instructional Methods: The “how to” in the delivery of lessons

- Project-based, blended, differentiation, mastery learning
- *Make sure to include how you are using data to inform and drive your instructional methods

Educational Practices: The structuring of classrooms and school operations to support the academic program

- Looping, multi-grade classrooms, year-round school calendar

A model response will provide researched reasoning behind the selected methods and practices and describe how they tie into the chosen education model.



Standards

Standards: Concise, written descriptions of what students are expected to know and be able to do at a specific stage of their education

- Standards define the level of work that demonstrates achievement of the standards, enabling a teacher to know “how good is good enough.”
- Example: ELAGSE6SL4 – Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- <https://www.georgiastandards.org/Georgia-Standards/Pages/default.aspx>



Curriculum

Curriculum: The lessons and academic content taught in a school or in a specific course or program

- Curricula is typically acquired and then tweaked to align to with standards and the school's mission and vision.
 - Examples: Singapore Math, Compass, iReady
- Curricula for all courses should be determined before the time of the interview – we want to know what curricula you are using.
- Petition should include a plan for ensuring alignment on the school level and on the Board level.



Cohesiveness

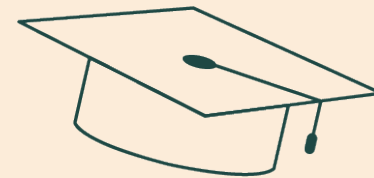
- Petition should describe how the school will integrate all aspects of its educational model, instructional methods, and curricula in an organized and cohesive program that complements the school's mission and vision.
- Exemplary responses may include the following:
 - Discuss instructional methods and instructional practices to be employed
 - Provide a day in the life of a student at your school
 - Include a school schedule, professional development plan, and budget that supports all of the proposed programs





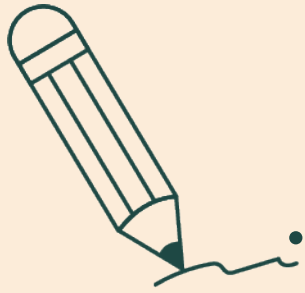
Assessment

- The systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs in order to assess what students know in order to improve learning and development.
- Assessment plans (to be discussed more in depth later) should include information from a variety of sources collected during various points in time, including, but not limited to, benchmark assessments and summative assessments.
- Must ensure alignment to state standards!
- State Charter Schools are not exempt from and cannot waive participation in mandatory state assessments.



Assessment Plan





Assessment Checklist

- Understand the role assessment results play in accountability
- Understand which assessments are mandatory and how to effectively implement them
- Select/develop interim assessments and implement a system of data driven instruction
 - Common interim assessments: 4-6 times a year
 - Alignment to state tests and college readiness
 - Use results to re-teach and reassess
- Staffing plan supports elements proposed in assessment plan
 - Mistake: thinking the school leader alone can do all of this work
- School calendar and schedule support elements proposed in assessment plan

Assessment	Content	Students
ACCESS for ELLs 2.0	Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking	K-12 English Learners in the ESOL program
Alternate ACCESS	Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking	English learners with significant cognitive disabilities that are severe enough to prevent meaningful participation in the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment.
Georgia Alternate Assessment 2.0 (GAA 2.0)	English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies in grades 5 and 8 and high school English/Language Arts and Mathematics, grades K, 3, 4, 6, and 7	Students with significant cognitive disabilities
Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills 2.0 (GKIDS 2.0)	English language arts (ELA) , Mathematics, Science (optional) , Social Studies (optional), Approaches to learning , Personal and Social Development, Motor skills (optional)	All Kindergarten Students
GKIDS 2.0 Readiness Check	Foundations of School Success, English/Language Arts, Mathematics	All Kindergarten Students
Georgia Milestones Assessment System End of Grade and End of Course	English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, grades 5 and 8 and high school English/Language Arts and Mathematics, grades 3, 4, 6, and 7	All 3-8 and high school students except those that don't qualify for GAA 2.0
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)	National assessments in different subjects	Selected Students in grades 4, 8, and 12 or ages 9, 13, and 17



Exemplary Response – Assessment Plan

- Discuss what assessments and data management systems will be used by the school;
- Explain how the school will make adjustments to instructional methods based on assessment data;
- Detail how the school will ensure that its assessments align to the GSE;
- Discuss how the school will ensure participation in statewide mandatory assessments;
- Provide information on how your school will use Milestones data in promotion/retention decisions;
- Explain how the school's staffing plan and school calendar support the proposed assessment plan.





Statewide Longitudinal Data System

The Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) is a free application from GaDOE that provides access to historical data, including Assessments, Attendance, Enrollment, Courses, and Grades, beginning with the 2006-2007 school year.

SLDS is designed to help districts, schools, and teachers make informed, data-driven decisions to improve student learning.

Choose a Student Information System (SIS) that is compatible with the SLDS.

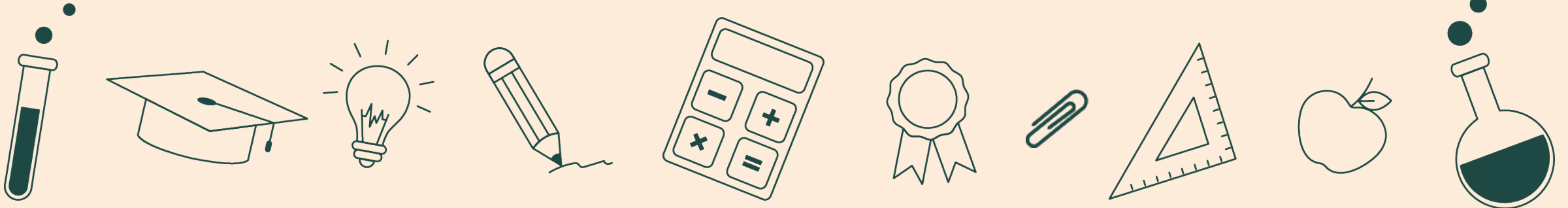
- Ex. Infinite Campus, Power School, and SchoolMax

Once approved, schedule to [receive training on the SLDS](#). GaDOE has staff dedicated to visiting schools and training personnel on the SLDS at no cost.



Specific Questions?

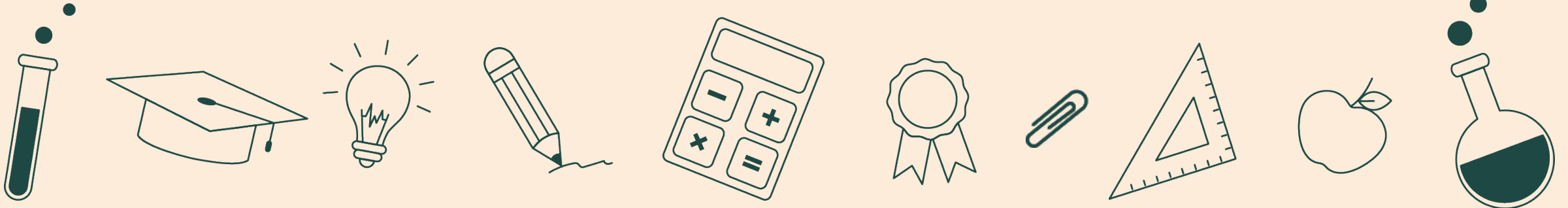
Henry Siebentritt,
Academic Programs Evaluation Analyst
henry.siebentritt@scsc.georgia.gov





The Petitioner's Guide to Pre-Opening Expectations

Kristen Easterbrook, Director of New Schools



Presentation Overview



- Facilities
- Community Engagement and Enrollment
- Funding and Support
- Pre-Opening Team Capacity



Facilities- When?

- Every petitioning group should have a facility plan or timeline reviewed and approved by the board.
 - The timeline should include major events and compliance deadlines.
 - Where can you find state compliance deadlines, rules, and laws?
 - [SCSC website](#)
 - [GADOE website](#)
 - Petitioning groups should have already begun working to identify a facility at the time of petition submission and should be able to speak to those plans during the capacity interview.
 - The facility selection process can be very time-consuming during the pre-opening year, so petitioners should consider the pre-opening timeline while working on their application.



Facilities- Where?



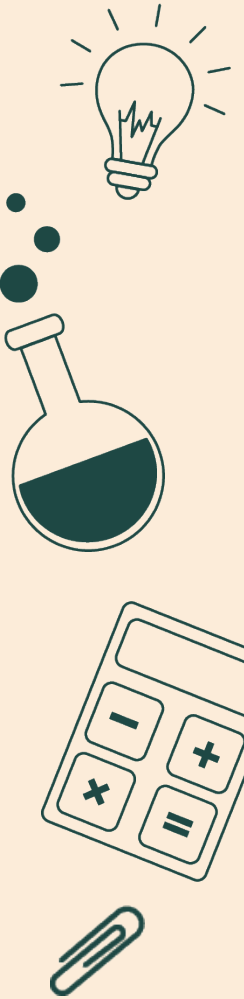
- The location of the main and alternative facility sites should be included in the petition application.
 - Does the proposed site match the school's mission and proposed academic plan?
 - Can the proposed site accommodate your projected enrollment?
 - If not, does the school already have a long-term facility plan?
 - Would any of your potential sites be excluded from consideration due to being potentially non-compliant with state or local laws?
 - GADOE Facility Requirements



Facilities- How?

- How will the school acquire the facility?
 - Lease
 - Purchase
 - Donation
 - Will require documentation to support the budget line item
- Will the facility require construction or renovation?
 - Are these costs appropriately considered in the budget?
- Will the school use a lender to finance the facility?
 - Has the school considered how this will impact the school's CPF score?

- Budget Considerations
 - New schools typically have a higher facility cost than established schools
 - Efficiencies of scale develop as you grow
 - Are there additional hidden costs?
- Be aware of local regulations
 - Building codes/ADA
 - Zoning
 - Certificate of Occupancy
- Be aware of GaDOE Facility Requirements



Facilities- Why?

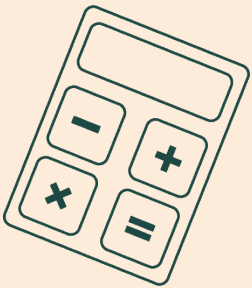


- The petitioner should be able to clearly explain the facility plan in both the petition and capacity interview.
- Why is the current plan superior to alternative strategies?
- Has the school done a cost-benefit analysis?
- Does the school's location meet the needs of the anticipated student population?
 - Petitioners should be prepared to address how students will get to the school (ex. transportation plans, available public transit, proximity to major thoroughfares or employers in the area)



Facilities- Who?

- Each petitioning group should have someone directly affiliated with the school identified to lead the facility efforts.
 - The governing board should consider what type of expertise it needs for the proposed facility plan
 - real estate, construction, legal, financial
 - Petitioners should be prepared to address questions related to the board's role in the facility selection process.
- The Facility Service Unit (FSU) at GADOE is there to answer your questions (after you have viewed their website).
 - FSU Website



Community Engagement and Enrollment

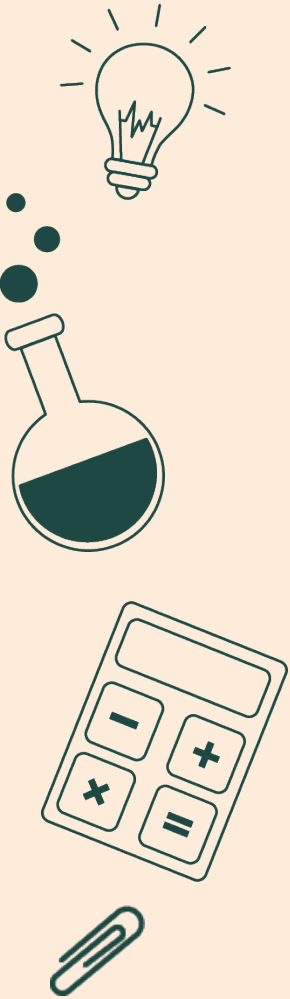


- What are reviewers looking for?
 - The petitioner has demonstrated that there is an area of need
 - Proposed student population information and statistics
 - Demonstrated efforts related to community engagement
 - Evidence of demand
 - Clear understanding of how community engagement relates to the proposed enrollment figures and projected revenue
 - Attainable and sustainable enrollment projections based on evidence-based community demand



Funding and Support

- Each petitioning school should demonstrate a realistic understanding of costs and requirements during the pre-opening year
 - Must demonstrate a plan for opening throughout the applicable petition questions
 - Budget template should reflect the plan
 - Highlight access to funding where applicable
 - Provide documentation!



Pre-Opening Team Capacity



- What are reviewers looking for?
 - Who is on your pre-opening team?
 - School Leader
 - Governing Board
 - Vendors
 - Larger Stakeholder Community
 - What role will they play?
 - Who will be responsible for different pre-opening requirements and how much support will they need to complete those tasks?
 - Facilities
 - Hiring
 - Enrollment and Marketing
 - Are there any special skills that you will need during the pre-opening phase?
 - If so, are they already on your team or do you still need to fill those gaps?
 - Will you need a volunteer or vendor?



Questions?

