

**STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION MEETING**  
**June 26, 2019 10:00 a.m.**  
**SCSC Meeting Room**  
**SCSC Conference Room, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, West Tower GA 30334**

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tom Lewis at approximately 10:02am. Commissioners Tony Lowden, Tom Lewis, Paul Williams, Jose Perez, Hunter Hill, and Buzz Brockway, and staff members Gregg Stevens—Interim Executive Director, Lauren Holcomb— Chief Communications Officer, Kristen Easterbrook—New Charter Program Manager, Katie Manthey—Academic Accountability Manager, Rennie Laryea— Organizational Development Manager, Terence Washington— Financial Accountability Manager, and Darcy Callaway— Business Manager were present. Approximately 60 members of the public were also present, including charter school staff and representatives, charter school business representatives, charter school representatives and Georgia Charter Schools Association representatives.
2. Chairman Lewis called for an approval of the meeting minutes from the May 29, 2019 meeting. Chairman Lewis then called for the approval of the petitioner interview minutes for June 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 2019. All minutes were approved.
3. Chairman Lewis began the session with a discussion regarding the Commissioners' steadfast commitments to the mission and vision of the Commission. Chairman Lewis reiterated the Commission's commitment in creating quality charter schools and ensuring student-centric schools.
4. The Chairman proceeded with Commission Officer elections. Vice Chairman Williams praised Chairman Lewis' past leadership and nominated him to continue serving as Chairman. Commissioner Lowden seconded the motion, and Chairman Lewis was unanimously elected for the position. Chairman Lewis then called for the election of the Vice Chairman of the Commission. Commissioner Lowden motioned to re-elect Commissioner Williams, and the motion was passed unanimously.
5. At approximately 10:15am, Chairman Lewis called for an executive session. Commissioners left the room to discuss personnel matters and returned at approximately 10:33am. No decision regarding personnel matters was made. Chairman Lewis motioned to return to public session.
6. Mr. Terence Washington, Financial Accountability Manager, was asked to present the SCSC FY20 Operational Budget. Mr. Washington stated that the proposed budget aligns with the mission of the SCSC and follows trends from previous years. Mr. Washington reminded the Commission that the agency is funded through an administrative withhold. Georgia law allows the Commission to withhold 3%, but the SCSC withholds 2% for existing schools and 1% for year one schools. Any remaining funds are returned to schools at the end of the year.
7. It was recommended that the Commission adopt the SCSC FY20 Operation Budget as prepared by SCSC staff. The motion passed and the budget was approved.
8. Ms. Kristen Easterbrook, New Charter Program Manager, provided a brief update on the three schools on track for opening in August. She then reported that The Community Academy for Architecture and Design (TCAAD) will be deferring opening for a year.

9. Ms. Easterbrook then spoke about recent petitioner interviews. Ms. Easterbrook stated that SCSC staff is currently compiling feedback to generate recommendations which will be shared with the Commissioners and returned with any Commissioners' feedback.
10. Mr. Stevens, Interim Executive Director, presented an action item, which was to amend the charter amendment for the International Academy of Smyrna to reflect the shifting needs of the school. The Amendment officially forgoes the school's International Baccalaureate model and shifts the curriculum's focus to global citizenship. The motion for the action item was passed.
11. Chairman Lewis then asked Ms. Katie Manthey to begin the School Performance Reviews. Ms. Manthey called up the first group which was Atlanta Heights Charter School. Atlanta Heights did not meet compliance standards in the area of academics. School representatives discussed programmatic adjustments to improve standards including increasing instructional rigor, improving remediation strategies, and providing improved professional development. The board questioned school representatives to elaborate in further detail about their plan to increase academic achievement and asked the officials to explain the school's reduction in expenditures on instruction in their current budget.
12. Genesis Innovation Academy for Boys and Genesis Innovation Academy for Girls did not meet compliance standards in the areas of finance, operations, or academics. To improve operations, the school has hired a full-time data manager and plans to follow SCSC recommendations to improve operation accountability. They also anticipate meeting in finances next year. Finally, the school showed academic measures indicating that the stats were trending up and that both schools are making progress in this area. The school also intends to implement assessment-based grading and increase teacher professional development. The Commission questioned school officials on teacher retention rates and the schools' abilities to train and retain the teachers necessary to implement their new curriculum changes.
13. Georgia Cyber Academy did not meet in the area of academics. The board spoke about its recent assumption over the employment of their staff and other operations which had been previously managed by an EMO. School representatives also expanded on changes in enrollment policies and outlined the ways in which these changes will positively impact students. In addition, the board discussed additions to the school's curriculum, plans to increase wrap-around services for students, and new approaches to student remediation. Representatives were queried about the board's capacity as it transitions away from the management company, and responded by highlighting the strength of the board and their new school leader. The Commission also asked for a further elaboration on school curriculum changes.
14. The Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics then presented. GSIC did not meet in the area of operations. School representatives discussed a number of efforts they have taken to increase operations scoring including more detail-oriented reporting and amended school policies in varying areas of noncompliance. The Commission asked the school representatives to explain its policy for announcing board meetings and receiving public comment.
15. Southwest Georgia STEM (SOWEGA) followed. The school did not meet in the areas of finance, operations, or academics. School representatives explained that the school's biggest challenge has been changes in the composition of the school. Representatives also outlined their various struggles

in compliance. The Commission questioned the representatives on why the school has not utilized SCSC supports and trainings in order to improve their operations compliance. The Commission strongly encourages the school to communicate with SCSC staff and avail themselves of all the resources SCSC offers.

16. Scintilla Charter Academy failed to meet standards in academic performance and finance. The board spoke about a recent bond deal that is projected to alleviate previous debt and improve financial outcomes. The school also noted that their failure to meet in financial standards was due to reporting errors and they have built the capacity of their staff to ensure that this error is not repeated.
17. Chairman Lewis asked if there was public comment. There was none.
18. The meeting adjourned at 12:55 pm.

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