

STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION INTERVIEW PANEL MEETING

June 19, 2019, 9:20 a.m.

**State Charter Schools Commission Conference Room
East Twin Tower, Room 1470B, Atlanta, Georgia 30334**

Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting convened at approximately 9:22am. The interview panel, consisting of Chairman Tom Lewis; Commission Staff Gregg Stevens, Morgan Felts, Kristen Easterbrook, Terence Washington, and Lauren Holcomb; Carolyn Bridges and Monica Flamini were present. Members of the public were also present.
2. The interview panel met with the governing board of the Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School. The interview panel began by asking about history of Fugees as a nonprofit and its transition into becoming an ESP. The interview panel inquired about the proposed community-based education model and curriculum design, which focuses on culturally relevant, project-based instruction and full English emersion for the school's targeted ELL student base. The interview panel then asked the petitioners to speak to the diversity and proficiency of their board and to clarify the relationship between the proposed charter school and the Fugees ESP, specifically outlining their proposed contract and the board's fiduciary duties over the ESP. The interview panel asked the charter school to clarify their relationship with the Fugees Family Foundation, particularly their involvement with their private school. Additionally, the interview panel questioned the governing board regarding their proposed facility, how the school plans to serve ELL students in later grades, teacher work schedules, and the board's capacity to operate as an LEA. Finally, the interview panel asked Georgia Fugees about their submitted budget and projected philanthropic funds. The interview panel expressed concerns about the school's student recruitment across a statewide attendance zone and the school's ability to fully adhere to its mission under open enrollment requirements. The interview concluded at approximately 10:26am. Interview panelist Monica Flamini left the meeting. The meeting broke for lunch.
3. The meeting reconvened at approximately 1:23pm. Mike Dudgeon joined the panel. The interview panel met with the governing board of Savannah Exploratory Charter Academy. The interview panel asked about the implementation of project-based learning and blended learning, why the model was chosen, what student assessments will be used, and how the assessment data will be utilized. The interview panel also inquired about the reason for choosing Inspire District Office as the ESP, the school's capacity to meet state standards, and their strategies behind teacher recruitment, as well as student recruitment strategies and plans for under-enrollment. The interview panel then asked about the ESP fee, how the board will ensure that the ESP reports accurate data, and the status of hiring a School Leader. The interview panel then asked about the proposed curriculum, whether the board has formalized any partnerships with other organizations, the backgrounds of the board members, the status of the facility search, and how facility safety compliance will be ensured. The interview panel expressed concerns over the ESP's financial well-being as reflected by their 990 and about contingency plans in the event the school's contract with the ESP was terminated. The interview concluded at approximately 2:44pm.
4. At approximately 3:25pm, the panel met with representatives from Destinations Career Academy of Georgia. The interview panel began by asking the governing board of the proposed charter school to provide a brief overview of a day in the life of a student and about its vision to create a

project-based learning model within a virtual school setting. The interview panel then asked the school to further elaborate on the feasibility of this approach and to describe how collaborative learning would be manageable for early grades. The interview panel also inquired about plans for student data assessment and employing those metrics to enhance the success of the school. The interview panel then questioned the governing board about their academic model's focus on career readiness, industry partnerships, and career readiness in early grades. In addition, the panel asked how the school plans to support economically disadvantaged students, how the governing board will ensure that the charter school can operate as an LEA, and the capacity of the board. The interview panel expressed concern about the alignment of the ESP's curriculum that the school would be using to Georgia standards as well as the proposed budget and the ESP's employment of the school leader. The interview concluded at approximately 4:37pm.

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