

**STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION MEETING**  
**August 28, 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 10:06 am.
2. Commissioners Tom Lewis, Paul Williams, Tony Lowden, Jose Perez, Buzz Brockway, Hunter Hill, Carmen Dill and staff members Lauren Holcomb – Executive Director, Morgan Felts – Chief Operations Officer, Kristen Easterbrook – Charter Development Manager, Katie Manthey – Director of Research and Evaluation, Rennie Laryea – Associate Counsel, Sarah Beck – Associate Counsel and Operational Accountability Manager, Terence Washington – Financial Accountability Manager, and Darcy Callaway – Business Manager were present.
3. Approximately 50 members of the public were also present, including charter school staff and representatives, charter school education service provider representatives and their attorney representatives, and Georgia Charter Schools Association representatives.
4. Chairman Lewis called for an approval of the meeting minutes from the July 31, 2019 meeting. The minutes were approved.
5. Ms. Lauren Holcomb provided an update on commissioner school visits and stated that the SCSC staff will work to schedule visits beginning in September. The priority is to visit new state charter schools that have recently opened or come under SCSC authorization. Commissioner Lowden also requested that charter schools up for renewal are prioritized for visits.
6. Ms. Lauren Holcomb then provided an update on staffing changes. The SCSC is currently hiring for the General Counsel position. Morgan Felts has transitioned to Chief Operations Officer, Katie Manthey has transitioned to Director of Research and Evaluation, Rennie Laryea has transitioned to Associate General Counsel, Sarah Beck has transitioned to Associate General Counsel, and Kristen Easterbrook has transitioned to Charter Development Manager.
7. Ms. Lauren Holcomb provided a brief update on Georgia Cyber Academy's legal dispute with their education service provider, K12, Inc. Representatives from Georgia Cyber Academy then presented an update on the difficulty accessing school records. There was a lengthy discussion between the Commissioners, Georgia Cyber Academy, and a Representative from K12, Inc.
8. Chairman Lewis then proceeded to the Action Items and asked Ms. Kristen Easterbrook, Charter Development Manager, to give an overview of the recommendation process for start-up charter school petitions. Ms. Easterbrook gave an overview on the process.

9. Ms. Kristen Easterbrook reviewed the recommendation for Savannah Exploratory Academy. Following the recommendation, the school had five minutes to present. A representative from Savannah Exploratory Academy highlighted the school's mission of providing educational excellence and expanding school choice in Savannah. Commissioner Lowden moved to approve, and Commissioner Brockway seconded the motion. The vote to approve was unanimous.
10. Chairman Lewis then proceeded to Old Business. Ms. Lauren Holcomb provided an update on the tabled petition for Destinations Career Academy of Georgia. An attorney representative presented on the status of the petition and governing board of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia.
11. Commissioner Williams then motioned to accept the recommendation of the SCSC staff to deny the petition with the condition that the SCSC staff continue to work with the board for the next petition cycle. Commissioner Dill seconded the motion. Commissioners Lowden, Williams, Dill, and Brockway voted to approve the motion. Commissioners Hill and Perez voted to deny the motion. The motion was approved.
12. Ms. Kristen Easterbrook, Charter Development Manager, gave an update on new school openings. Three schools have delayed opening until the 2020 school year. Two new charter schools have opened this fall. In addition, two schools have transitioned from local approval to state approved charter schools and have opened this 2019 school year as SCSC schools. Ms. Easterbrook also noted that SCSC staff will be monitoring and visiting the newly opened schools in the coming months to help ensure their success.
13. Ms. Rennie Laryea, Associate Counsel, reviewed the supports offered to new schools, tenured schools, and school leadership for this upcoming year. She described the various trainings that the SCSC will be hosting including Petitioner Boot Camp, Finance Training, and Governance Board Training.
14. Mr. Terence Washington, Financial Accountability Manager, provided an update on financial accountability including the administrative withhold return for schools to utilize instructional services. He described the plan for school head counts and how to ensure the accuracy of the data.
15. Ms. Sarah Beck, Associate Counsel and Operational Accountability Manager, provided an update on operational accountability and plans for governing board monitoring. She discussed the timeframe for site visits to schools and desk monitoring visits.
16. Ms. Katie Manthey, Director of Research and Evaluation, provided an update on research related to the relationship between Foothills Education Charter High School and the National Guard's Youth Challenge Program. Representatives from the school presented

the report and spoke to the success of Foothills Education Charter High School in meeting standards and maintaining a successful partnership that supports students who have not been able to thrive in traditional school environments.

17. Chairman Lewis asked if there was public comment. There was none.

18. The meeting adjourned at 12:33 pm.

DRAFT