

STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION MEETING

April 29, 2015, 10 a.m.

**Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning Conference Room
East Twin Tower, Room 854, Atlanta, Georgia 30334**

Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jennifer Rippner. Chairman Rippner verified that a quorum existed. Commissioners Tom Lewis and Tony Lowden were not present.
2. Also present were Commission staff members Bonnie Holliday—Executive Director, Gregg Stevens—General Counsel, and Terence Washington – Finance and Operational Accountability Manager.
3. Approximately 25 members of the public also attended the meeting including charter school staff and representatives and charter school business representatives. Representatives from GCSA were also present.
4. After calling the meeting to order, Chairman Rippner called for approval of the meeting minutes from the March 25th SCSC meeting. Commissioner Williams made a motion to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Perez provided a second. There was no discussion, and the minutes were unanimously approved by those present.
5. Chairman Rippner then asked Director Holliday to review the portion of the agenda pertaining to agency-wide updates. Director Holliday discussed the SCSC's recent site visit to the Charter Conservatory for Liberal Arts and Technology (CCAT) in Statesboro on April 9, 2015. Commissioner Hogg stated that, while the school's staff was clearly dedicated to its students, the introduction of more structure to the school's open concept may assist the school in improving academic results. Director Holliday then noted that the remaining quarterly site visits to state charter schools in 2015:
 - 3rd Quarter Visit: August 2015 (Date TBD), Ivy Prep Young Men's Leadership Academy in Atlanta
 - 4th Quarter Visit: November 2015 (Date TBD), Utopian Academy for the Arts in Riverdale
6. Next, Director Holliday provided an update on recent SCSC trainings. She announced that the second installment of the Charter School Financial Certification Program was currently staking place and would continue through April 30 and that the third installment of the CSFCP is scheduled to take place on May 6-7. Director Holliday then noted that a special TKES/LKES sustainability training for state charter schools will take place June 15-19.
7. Chairman Rippner then asked for an update on academic accountability. Director Holliday provided a comprehensive presentation regarding state charter school performance on the College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) and the SCSC's value-add analysis completed by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA). Director Holliday detailed the data and methodology of the CCRPI and value-add analysis and presented the general

results of state charter schools. SCSC commissioners discussed their expectations for state charter school performance and the need to consistently remind schools that schools that do not increase student performance or demonstrate student growth will face closure.

8. Next, Terence Washington provided an update on financial and operational accountability. Mr. Washington noted that staff recently conducted compliance monitoring visits to Mountain Education Center High School, Utopian Academy for the Arts, and Provost Academy. He explained that SCSC staff would be sending its final written monitoring letter within the week. Mr. Washington encouraged any school that was found to have a finding relating to financial management to participate in the Charter School Financial Certification Program. Next, Mr. Washington updated commissioners on the SCSC's financial auditing program. He noted that 13 of 15 SCSC schools have chosen to participate in the SCSC's auditing program for FY16 and one additional school will utilize the Department of Audits and Accounts.
9. Gregg Stevens then provided an update on legal compliance. He noted that the SCSC released its 2015 petition application on February 26th, and the deadline for submission is May 15, 2015. Mr. Stevens explained that the SCSC staff would begin compiling interview panels once all applications are submitted. Mr. Stevens stated that he was encouraged by the staff's interactions with prospective petitioners and that he expects several quality petitions to be submitted as part of the SCSC 2015 Petition Review Cycle.
10. Chairman Rippner then called for public comment. Craig Cason from DuBois Integrity Academy spoke to introduce the school's new school leader Dr. Stephanie Payne. Next, Andrew Lewis from the Georgia Charter Schools Association spoke to commend the SCSC for its commitment to assessing school performance through measures not limited to absolute student achievement on standardized tests, but he also encouraged commissioners to consider the effect of funding inequity when evaluating state charter schools.
11. Following public comment, Chairman Rippner asked for a motion to convene an executive session to discuss federal court proceedings related to the Byron-Peach Charter High School and the SCSC. Commissioner Hogg offered a motion, and Commissioner Williams provided a second. The motion was unanimously approved by those present, and the executive session was convened at approximately 11:00 a.m.
12. The executive session concluded at approximately 11:40 a.m., and the meeting was again opened to the public. There being no further business before the SCSC, Chairman Rippner asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Williams offered a motion, and Commissioner Hogg provided a second. The motion was unanimously approved by those present, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:42 a.m.