



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION RETURNS FUNDS TO SCHOOLS FOR THE FIFTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR**

*Commission has voluntarily returned nearly \$16 million to state charter schools since its establishment in 2013.*

**ATLANTA** - The State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia (SCSC) today announced that it returned over four million dollars to state charter schools following the close of Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. SCSC operations are solely funded through an administrative fee deducted from the annual operating budgets of state charter schools.

"Charter schools must academically outperform the traditional schools that surround them while often operating with less resources," said State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia Executive Director Bonnie Holliday. "The State Charter Schools Commission is pleased that we can maintain efficient agency operations and send dollars back to schools and students."

In March, the SCSC unanimously approved a recommendation to return any remaining funds to schools upon satisfaction of the SCSC's FY 2018 expenses, as it has done in previous years. Because these funds do not lapse, state charter schools can utilize the money in the 2018-19 school year.

"While the additional funds do not bring us to funding equity with traditional district schools in our neighborhood (Atlanta), we will further invest in our teacher training and development programs, as we believe as our teachers get better - our scholars get better," said Resurgence Hall Head of School Tori Hines.

Earlier this year, the SCSC also voted for the fifth consecutive year to decrease its administrative fee from three percent to slightly less than two percent in FY 2019 for existing schools and from three percent to one percent for schools in the first year of operations. In statute, the administrative fee is set at three percent unless the Commission votes to reduce that percentage. By decreasing the administrative fee and returning additional funds to schools at the end of the fiscal year, the SCSC voluntarily returned \$4,119,834.74 in additional funding to state charter schools in FY 2018. In the past five fiscal years, the



SCSC has provided a combined total of more than \$15.8 million in additional funding to state charter schools through the reduced administrative fee and returned funds.

“Additional income from the SCSC is critically important for newly opened schools like us,” said International Charter Academy of Georgia Board Chair Minako Ahearn, which opened for the 2018-19 school year. “It is difficult to solicit donations during the year-long preparatory period when the school doesn't yet exist. However, we still had to raise start-up cost on our own before the state funding begins. The additional funding from the SCSC allows us to hire great teachers and purchase more reading materials in both Japanese and English.”

*The SCSC is a state-level, independent charter school authorizing entity. The mission of the SCSC 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. The SCSC has the power to approve or deny petitions for state charter schools and renew, non-renew, or terminate state charter school petitions in accordance with Georgia law.*

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