



## Public Access to Information on State Charter School Websites

As of August 1, 2016, all state charter schools are expected to adhere to rule 691-2-.03 *State Charter School Monitoring* that requires each state charter school to have a website with easy access for the public to the following information:

- Governing Board membership;
- Governing Board meeting calendar;
- Meeting agendas for upcoming Governing Board meetings;
- Meeting minutes for past Governing Board meetings (unless the Georgia Open Meetings Act limits their publication, e.g., executive session to discuss personnel matters);
- Procedure for contacting the school’s Governing Board;
- Procedure for contacting the school’s most senior school administrator;
- Any admissions application utilized by the school;
- Notification of enrollment and admission procedures required by SCSC Rule 691-2-.05, including the date, time, and location of any upcoming enrollment lottery; and
- The charter school’s charter contract

Additionally, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167.1 requires that the summary of the proposed and adopted annual operated budgets of SCSC schools be posted on each school’s website.

The chart below lists items that state charter schools are required to have on their websites, along with guidance (if applicable) about the required information. Note that while the SCSC will monitor schools to ensure that this information specifically is included on their websites, this document is not meant to serve as a comprehensive list of all items that should be included on a school’s website.

Item Required	Notes
<b>1. Governing Board membership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List <u>all</u> board members’ first and last names</li> </ul>
<b>2. Governing Board Meeting Calendar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your school meets at a reoccurring time each month, you must still list the scheduled meeting dates.</li> <li>• To ensure that the governing board meeting calendar is easily assessable to the public, do not <i>only</i> list board meeting dates in the general school calendar. List out the board meeting dates where you have board information on your website.</li> <li>• If a special meeting (i.e., an unscheduled meeting to deal with a matter that cannot wait until the next meeting) is needed, the school should post information about the meeting on the school’s website as soon as reasonably possible and provide oral or written notice of the special meeting to the legal organ of where the school is located at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.</li> </ul>

<p><b>3. Meeting agendas for upcoming Governing Board meetings</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting agendas should be posted as far in advance as reasonably possible, but at some time during the two-week period immediately prior to the meeting, at a minimum.</li> <li>• Meeting agendas for special meetings (i.e., an unscheduled meeting to deal with a matter that cannot wait until the next meeting) should be posted as soon as reasonably possible.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Meeting minutes for past Governing Board meetings (unless the Georgia Open Meetings Act limits their publication)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While there is no requirement regarding when meeting minutes should be posted, meeting minutes should be approved and made available for the public no later than immediately following the next regularly scheduled meeting.</li> <li>• Meeting minutes, at a minimum, must include the names of the governing board members present, a description of each motion or other proposal made, the identity of persons making and seconding the motion or other proposal, and a record of all votes. If a vote on a proposal is not unanimous, the names of each governing board member who votes for, against, and/or abstains should be recorded in the minutes.</li> <li>• If the governing board has an executive session meeting, the minutes from the executive session must specify each issue discussed but should not be posted publically and are not subject to disclosure under the Georgia Open Meetings Act.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Procedure for contacting the school's Governing Board</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SCSC will defer to individual schools for establish policies and procedures for ensuring that individuals can contact the school administration and governing board. These procedures may include an appropriate chain of command for stakeholders to follow prior to contacting the school administration and governing board. Most schools likely already have procedures they utilize that allow stakeholders to contact appropriate individuals in the chain of command.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Procedure for contacting the school's most senior school administrator</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SCSC will defer to individual schools for establish policies and procedures for ensuring that individuals can contact the school administration and governing board. These procedures may include an appropriate chain of command for stakeholders to follow prior to contacting the school administration and governing board. Most schools likely already have procedures they utilize that allow stakeholders to contact appropriate individuals in the chain of command.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Any admissions application utilized by the school</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State charter schools should continue to make admissions applications available as long as they enroll students even though they may be oversubscribed. This allows the school to fulfill its open enrollment requirements as students completing applications during periods of enrollment will be added to the school's waitlist.</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Notification of enrollment and admission procedures required by SCSC Rule 691-2-.05, including the date, time, and location of any upcoming enrollment lottery</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment and admission procedures should be available in accordance with the school's policies, but, at a minimum, must be made available no later than two weeks prior to an enrollment or admission opportunity pursuant to SCSC Rule 691-2-.05.</li> </ul>
<p><b>9. The charter school's charter contract</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school must post its charter contract and any charter amendments.</li> </ul>

<p><b>10. The school's FY17 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school must, at a minimum, post a summary of its state fiscal year 2017 budget as required by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167.1. (You may wish to refer to the SCSC's <a href="#">Legal Obligations of a State Charter School</a> guidance for more information.)</li> </ul>
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## FAQs About 691-2-.03 State Charter School Monitoring

### **1. Why is the SCSC requiring schools to post this information?**

Georgia is committed to ensuring transparent operations of school districts and charter schools. For example, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-167.1 (which went into effect on July 1), requires school districts and state charter schools to hold two public hearings prior to adopting an annual budget. The SCSC furthers this dedication to maintaining high standards of transparency both for its operations and the operations of state charter schools. Additionally, several state laws have been passed or proposed that require schools to promote transparency in their operations. While many state charter schools readily make information available on their websites, there is room for improvement across state charter schools as a whole. One of the leading concerns expressed to the SCSC from parents and other stakeholders is not knowing who and how to contact those responsible for the day-to-day operations of a school. By having this information available on state charter school websites, schools and the SCSC will increase efficiency by allowing stakeholders to directly access information that is often requested from multiple sources. Keeping this information up to date on state charter school websites will allow state charter school leaders to focus on school administration rather than responding to data requests. Additionally, SCSC staff will be able to access basic information regarding state charter schools, which will minimize its need to request data on an individual basis.

### **2. How often are state charter schools required to update this information?**

Because the goal of this rule is to promote transparency, each state charter school should update information on its website as changes occur. The SCSC will defer to individual schools to establish policies and procedures for ensuring that updates occur in a timely manner. Failing to update data in a manner that creates consistent patterns of noncompliance may lead to additional requirements and regulation.

### **3. What does “easily accessible” mean?**

The SCSC will defer to individual schools for the design and maintenance of their respective websites. However, this information should be available to stakeholders without the need to create accounts or otherwise provide or verify information.

### **4. What timeframes apply to posting governing board meeting agendas and minutes?**

State charter schools must adhere to notification requirements provided in the Georgia Open Meetings Act. O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(e)(1) requires agendas to be available as far in advance as reasonably possible but at some time during the two-week period immediately prior to the meeting, at a minimum. Meeting minutes are not required to be posted within a certain timeframe. Accordingly, the SCSC will defer to individual schools to establish policies and procedures for ensuring that minutes are posted in a timely manner.

### **5. Is there a specific contact procedure that schools should use for contacting the school's administration or governing board?**

The SCSC will defer to individual schools for establish policies and procedures for ensuring t that individuals can contact the school administration and governing board. These procedures may include an appropriate chain of command for stakeholders to follow prior to contacting the school administration and governing board. Most schools likely already have procedures they utilize that allow stakeholders to contact appropriate individuals in the chain of command.

**6. When do admissions applications and enrollment procedures need to be published?**

State charter schools should continue to make admissions applications available as long as they enroll students even though they may be oversubscribed. This allows the school to fulfill its open enrollment requirements as students completing applications during periods of enrollment will be added to the school's waitlist. Enrollment and admission procedures should be available in accordance with the school's policies, but, at a minimum, must be made available no later than two weeks prior to an enrollment or admission opportunity pursuant to SCSC Rule 691-2-.05.