

## **STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION MEETING**

**July 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. Commissioner Tony Lowden was 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, Morgan Felts – Deputy Counsel and Petitions Manager, Lauren Holcomb – Director of Organizational and Resource Development, and Katie Manthey – Business and Operations Manager.
3. Approximately 30 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 June 24th 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. Chairman Rippner then asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 20-24 petitioner interviews. Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Perez seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the minutes were unanimously approved.
5. Chairman Rippner then asked Director Holliday to review the portion of the agenda pertaining to agency-wide updates. Director Holliday noted upcoming quarterly visits to state charter schools in 2015:
  - 3rd Quarter Visit: August 27, 2015, Ivy Prep Young Men’s Leadership Academy in Atlanta
  - 4th Quarter Visit: November 2015 (Date TBD), Utopian Academy for the Arts in Riverdale
6. Chairman Rippner then asked Lauren Holcomb for an update on organizational development. Ms. Holcomb noted a special TKES/LKES sustainability training took place in June that the final installment of the Charter School Financial Certification Program was currently taking place. Ms. Holcomb announced that the 2015-16 Training Calendar was now available on the SCSC website. Lastly, Ms. Holcomb noted a TKES/LKES credentialing session in August, and that the SCSC would host two governance training sessions in the 2015-16 year. The first session is November 5-6 at Little Ocmulgee State Park and the second is February 10-11 at the Atlanta Evergreen Marriott Stone Mountain.
7. Chairman Rippner then asked for an update on academic accountability. Director Holliday shared that SCSC staff held a webinar with state charter schools on July 15<sup>th</sup> to review the

contents of the performance framework and answer questions. An in-person technical assistance session is scheduled for today, July 29<sup>th</sup>, in the DECAL conference room at 1pm. All state charter schools were invited to attend. The framework will be posted on the SCSC website for further stakeholder review and the proposed timeline for adoption is September.

8. Next, Terence Washington provided an update on financial and operational accountability. Mr. Washington noted that in early August, the SCSC will host the first in a series of web meetings to facilitate the dissemination of fiscal best practices among charter schools. The first meeting will focus on best practices for new schools as well as best practices that will help all SCSC schools get off to a good start in the new fiscal year. The specific timing and details of the meeting will be made available to school leaders in late July.
9. Chairman Rippner then asked Morgan Felts for an update on the 2015 petition process. Ms. Felts shared that petitioner interviews were conducted July 20<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>. SCSC staff convened interview panels that consisted of both state and national level education, finance, and law experts. Ms. Felts stated that recommendations for both approvals and denials are forthcoming and are based on SCSC staff review along with the collective feedback of interview panelists. Recommendations will be brought to the SCSC for action at the August meeting. In the event the interview panel concluded that additional technical clarification was needed with regard to some aspect of a school's petition, the SCSC staff will recommend the SCSC delay action on that school until September.
10. Then, Susan Adams, Assistant Commissioner for the Department of Early Care and Learning, provided a presentation on the Georgia Pre-K program. Commissioners noted their support for the pre-K program and desire for more charter schools to explore this option.
11. Gregg Stevens then provided an update on legal compliance. Mr. Stevens presented a request from Byron Peach Charter High School to amend terms of their charter to 2016-2021 as the school has delayed its opening to Fall 2016. Commissioner Perez made a motion to approve the amendment, and Commissioner Williams provided a second. There being no discussion, Chairman Rippner called for a vote and the amendment was unanimously approved.
12. There being no public comment, Chairman Rippner asked for additional items from commissioners. Chairman Rippner presented a gift to Director Holliday on behalf of commissioners, to celebrate the upcoming arrival of Director Holliday's first child.
13. There being no further business before the SCSC, Chairman Rippner asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Lewis offered a motion, and Commissioner Perez provided a second. The motion was unanimously approved by those present, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:15 a.m.