

## STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION MEETING

August 31, 2016, 10:00 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 at approximately 10:00 am. Chairman Rippner verified that a quorum was present. Commissioner Tom Lewis was absent.
2. Also present were Commission staff members Bonnie Holliday—Executive Director, Gregg Stevens—Deputy Director and General Counsel, Terence Washington—Finance and Operational Accountability Manager, Morgan Felts—Associate General Counsel and Petitions Manager, Katie Manthey—Academic Accountability Manager, and Sarah Beck—Business Operations Manager.
3. Approximately 50 members of the public also attended the meeting including charter school staff and representatives, charter school business representatives, Georgia Charter Schools Association representatives, Georgia Department of Education representatives, and members from the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement.
4. Chairman Rippner called for approval of the meeting minutes from the June 29<sup>th</sup> SCSC meeting and Petitioner Interviews conducted on July 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>. Commissioner Tony Lowden made a motion to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Jose Perez provided a second. There was no discussion, and the minutes were unanimously approved by those present.
5. Chairman Rippner asked Director Holliday to discuss the SCSC’s scheduled site visits. Director Holliday noted that she and Commissioners Lowden and Perez will be visiting the DuBois Integrity Academy in Riverdale on September 13<sup>th</sup>. Pataula Charter Academy will be hosting a groundbreaking ceremony for its new facility on September 16<sup>th</sup> that Commissioners Hogg and Lowden will attend.
6. Chairman Rippner asked Mr. Gregg Stevens to present the SCSC’s school openings. He stated that there are 23 state charter schools open for students this fall. Mr. Stevens explained that four state charter schools, Brookhaven Innovation Academy, Cirrus Academy Charter School, Liberty Tech Charter School and Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School will open for the first time. Mr. Stevens briefly discussed the opening successes and obstacles of the new schools and shared that the charter contracts for new schools going forward will require the schools to demonstrate progress in meeting milestones contained in the SCSC Pre-Opening Checklist to avoid a suspended opening.
7. Next, Chairman Rippner requested that Ms. Lauren Holcomb provide an update on organizational development. Ms. Holcomb reported on various SCSC trainings that were conducted since the last meeting and thanked the Georgia Department of Education for its assistance in the SCSC’s

TKES/LKES Certification Trainings. Additionally, Ms. Holcomb shared information about a monitoring visit webinar for SCSC schools to help them prepare for their SCSC monitoring visit. Ms. Holcomb noted that providing this webinar was in direct response to school feedback.

8. Chairman Rippner then asked Ms. Katie Manthey to provide an update on accountability. Ms. Manthey shared that all schools had opted into the Comprehensive Performance Framework (CPF) as their accountability measure and that SCSC staff will bring schools' CPF charter contract amendments to the September SCSC meeting for Commissioners' approval.
9. Next, Chairman Rippner asked Terence Washington to present an update on financial compliance. Mr. Washington stated that \$1,782,690 of the SCSC's administrative withhold would be returned to SCSC schools. Chairman Rippner asked if we knew how those funds are generally used by schools. Mr. Washington stated that the schools' plans for the funds were not known at this time, but could be tracked and documented.
10. Chairman Rippner then asked Morgan Felts and Gregg Stevens to share the schools being recommended for approval. Before sharing the SCSC's recommended schools, Ms. Felts thanked Commissioners for their time and efforts in reviewing applications and interviewing prospective charter schools. Mr. Stevens informed the Commissioners that all schools not recommended for approval subsequently withdrew their petitions from consideration and thus the Commissioners would not be considering any recommendations for denial. As a result, Chairman Rippner requested that only the schools with recommended pending before the Commission be discussed.
11. Ms. Felts presented a brief overview of DREAM Academy that will be located in Macon. Ms. Felts stated that the school will serve students in grades K-10 during the proposed charter term with a focus on the arts in partnership with the Otis Redding Foundation. The motion for approval was made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Hogg. Dr. Karla Redding-Andrews was present to provide a description of the school and the governing board's eagerness to serve the community. Chairman Rippner called for a vote and the recommendation was unanimously approved with Commissioner Lowden abstaining from the vote.
12. Ms. Felts then presented a brief overview of Genesis Academy for Boys that will be located in Atlanta. Ms. Felts stated that the school will serve students in grades K-10 during the proposed charter term and will focus on STEM and project-based learning. The motion for approval was made by Commissioner Perez and seconded by Commissioner Lowden. Chairman Rippner called for a vote and the recommendation was unanimously approved by those present.
13. Ms. Felts then presented a brief overview of Genesis Academy for Girls that will be located in Atlanta. Ms. Felts stated that the school will serve students in grades K-10 during the proposed charter term and will focus on STEM and project-based learning. The motion for approval was made by Commissioner Perez and seconded by Commissioner Lowden. Chairman Rippner called for a vote and the recommendation was unanimously approved by those present.

14. Next, Ms. Felts presented a brief overview of Resurgence Hall, a charter school that would be located in Fulton County. Ms. Felts explained that Resurgence Hall will be a K-8 school with a focus on computer science, design-thinking and literacy. The motion for approval was made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Hogg. Ms. Tori Jackson-Hines, the prospective school leader, added to Ms. Felts' description of the school. Chairman Rippner called for a vote and the recommendation was unanimously approved by those present.
15. Ms. Felts then provided a brief overview of SAIL (School for Arts-Infused Learning), a proposed charter school that will be located in Columbia County. Ms. Felts stated that the school will serve students in grades K-10 during the proposed charter term with a focus on arts-infusion. The motion for approval was made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Lowden. The school's governing board chair, Ms. Kristy Zgol spoke on behalf of the school to detail the school's readiness to begin operations. Chairman Rippner called for a vote and the recommendation was unanimously approved by those present.
16. Chairman Rippner stated that the October meeting would be canceled due the National Association of Charter School Authorizers conference that will be held in Atlanta that month. A called meeting would be utilized if necessary.
17. Chairman Rippner next called for public comments. Tony Roberts, President and CEO Georgia Charter School Association, thanked the commission and staff for their work as well as advocating for the Genesis Schools for Boys and Girls.
18. There being no further business before the SCSC, Chairman Rippner adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:10 a.m.