

State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

Staff Recommendation for the 2014 Petition Cycle August 27, 2014

School:	Fulton Sunshine Academy
Attendance Zone:	Fulton County
Grade Levels:	K-5
Staff Recommendation:	SCSC staff recommends that the petition for Fulton Sunshine Academy be denied .

Rationale:

1. The petition review process and interview did not establish Fulton Sunshine Academy's potential to operate as a high-quality state charter school that also serves as its own LEA. While the school's leadership and governing board are able to currently meet the needs of students as a locally-approved charter school in Fulton County, it was not clear from the petition or interview that the school will be able to manage the obligations of an LEA. This lack of understanding is troubling as the school's operation for multiple years as a locally-approved charter school under Fulton County Schools should have revealed the responsibilities of operating a school as well as an LEA. However, the school administration and governing board failed to adequately address how the school would operate as an LEA.

In response to how Fulton Sunshine Academy would meet its responsibilities as serving as an LEA, the school detailed its commitment to ensuring appropriate special education services are provided to all students. While providing special education services in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is an important aspect of an LEA, the duties of an LEA are far more reaching. As the petition and interview did not demonstrate that Fulton Sunshine Academy could meet those obligations, SCSC staff will recommend that the SCSC deny its petition as a state charter school.

2. Neither the information provided in the petition nor the responses provided in the interview indicated why Fulton Sunshine Academy and its students would benefit from operating as a state charter school rather than a locally-approved charter school. Instead, the interview indicated that the school's relationship with Fulton County Schools and possible closure is a motivating factor in the school seeking authorization by the SCSC. The SCSC is committed to high-quality charter schools throughout the state and upholding the accountability standards of local school districts that, like Fulton County Schools, have demonstrated a commitment to support and encourage high-quality charter schools.

Link to Petition and Related Materials:

[Click here to view Fulton Sunshine Academy Elementary School](#)
