STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION OF GEORGIA

APRIL 2015 NEWSLETTER

SCSC Meetings

The State Charter Schools Commission last met on March 25, 2015. The meeting minutes are available here. The next Commission meeting is on Wednesday, April 29, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. in the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Board Room. The 2015 Commission meeting calendar is available on the SCSC website.

2015 Petition Cycle

The application for the 2015 petition cycle is available here. All applicants should ensure they use the 2015 version since it is different than the 2014 version. Please note that a revised budget template was posted on the SCSC website as of March 19th. Any petitioner who completed the budget template prior to March 19th should transfer the information to the new template. Applications are due May 15, 2015.

SCSC Research on Virtual School Impact

The SCSC recently commissioned an in-depth analysis of virtual school performance and impact nationwide. The full report is now available here.

Training Opportunities

The 2014-2015 SCSC Training Agenda is available on the **Training Opportunities** page of the SCSC website. This draft list is intended to assist schools in planning and dates/topics are subject to change. Presentations and materials from SCSC trainings are available on the **Training Presentations and Materials** page of the SCSC website.

Please RSVP to lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov if you wish to attend a training session.

Charter Schools Financial Management Certification Program
Introductory Accounting
RESCHEDULED for *April 28-30, 2015* due to inclement weather conditions in February
Atlanta, Georgia
Invited: School Business Managers and Administrators

The SCSC will offer a full scholarship to state charter business managers and/or administrators who wish to enroll in the Carl Vinson Institute of Government's Charter Schools Financial Management Certification Program. Courses must be completed within a three-year period. The Introductory Accounting course will introduce participants to basic accounting concepts for governmental funds. Topics covered include – accounting equation, chart of accounts, double entry accounting, accounting systems and records, fund accounting, basis of accounting, payroll and benefit accounting, and case study. Visit the SCSC website to see the full program overview.

Budgeting and Purchasing for Charter Schools
May 6-7, 2015
Atlanta, Georgia
Invited: School Business Managers and Administrators

This course is part of the CVIOG Financial Management Certification and will focus on roles of the board and staff in budgeting, budget preparation process, estimating revenues and expenditures, projection of ending fund balance, and justification of budget to funding authorities and board. Budget administration, long term financial planning, and the Quality Basic Education funding formula will also be discussed. The Purchasing course will focus on topics important to the purchasing process, from determining needs to receipt of purchased goods and services. Also discussed are alternative purchasing methods, required documentation, and ethics. Visit the SCSC website to see the full program overview.

Financial System Review
Georgia Charter Schools Association
Individualized Sessions with Schools

The SCSC will once again offer Financial System Review services led by the Georgia Charter Schools Association (GCSA) to state charter schools that did not receive the service last year. For schools that take advantage of this opportunity, Elisa Falco from GCSA will work with the school leader and financial management team to conduct an in-depth financial system review. The review will assist schools in establishing or improving effective internal controls, implementing best practices for accounting practices and procedures, and will provide schools with an assessment of fiscal health. The two-part review includes an analysis of the school's internal controls and an analysis of the school's budget. More detailed information is available here.

Strategic Planning with the Governing Board
Carl Vinson Institute of Government
Individualized Sessions with Schools

The SCSC will once again offer individualized strategic planning sessions with facilitators from the Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG) to state charter school boards and staffs that did not receive the service last year. A CVIOG facilitator will work with the governing board chair to conduct a one-day retreat for individual state charter school boards and assist the board in developing an executable strategic plan. The facilitator will work closely with the board chair to customize the process to meet the school's needs. The opportunity will also include two check-in meetings with the facilitator. More detailed information is available here.

TKES/LKES Sustainability Training
June 15, 17, 18, 19
The GaDOE West Tower Training Room A (10th Floor)
Atlanta, Georgia
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. each day

Every Georgia LEA is required to create a sustainability plan for the implementation of the Teacher and Leader Keys Effectiveness Systems and to attend sustainability training. The SCSC, in conjunction with the GaDOE, has developed training specifically focused on best practices for evaluation sustainability in state charter schools. It's imperative that

<u>TKES/LKES team leads attend the training for their designated area(s)</u>. More information about this training is available [here](#).

June 15 - SLO Sustainability Day 1
June 17 - SLO Sustainability Day 2
June 18 - Electronic Platform Sustainability
June 19 - Data Sustainability

Schools should send the names of the representatives who will attend each session to [Lauren Holcomb](#) and notify [Kathy Reese](#) at the GaDOE of any changes to your sustainability plan as soon as possible.

To attend a training session or for more information, contact [Lauren Holcomb](#), SCSC Director of Organizational and Resource Development, via email or at (404) 656-2822.

Reporting Deadlines

The following reporting items are due in April and May:

- **SCSC Petition Application**
- **Title I Significant Growth or Expansion**
- **Title I, Part A Budget Amendments**
- **Data Collections**: Student Class-Class Size, Teacher Class

The [FY15 Reporting Calendar](#) is available on the SCSC website. For help accessing the GaDOE portal and with any application functionality issues, please contact the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) Information Systems Customer Support Center at 1-800-869-1011 or **dticket@doe.k12.ga.us**.

Please direct questions about reporting items to [Terence Washington](#), SCSC Finance and Operational Accountability Manager, via email or at (404) 656-2837.

Georgia Milestones Assessment Monitoring

As announced at the March SCSC meeting, the Governor's Office of Student Achievement has asked the SCSC to assist with Georgia Milestones Assessment monitoring in state charter schools this year. As a result, the SCSC will randomly monitor schools throughout testing administration. Please be assured that monitoring is a precautionary procedure that all school are subject to in any given year. The monitor's presence at the school will not be disruptive to the testing environment or an inconvenience to staff. Please contact SCSC staff if you have any questions.

Georgia Milestones Assessment Updates from the GaDOE

The GaDOE has shared several important updates and considerations regarding Georgia Milestones. Please note that each of these is important for successful test administrations and apply to both the End of Grade as well as End of Course administrations. However, the first item listed is extremely critical. Please see below:

Critical Update for Paper/Pencil Administrations
Test Form Code on Student Answer Documents (Paper/Pencil)

For both our current End of Grade (EOG) and the upcoming End of Course (EOC) measures, please be aware that it is **critical** that each student's paper/pencil answer document has the correct form coded. Given the differences in the structure of our new assessment system versus our previous testing programs, **failure to code the test form will cause a significant delay in scoring**.

Please remember that it is no longer the case that we have the same base test form for all students. In previous years, scoring was able to continue because all students took the same base form. Because this is no longer the case, failure to code the test form will stop – completely – the scoring process for an <u>entire</u> school until the form can be identified and coded by CTB. This will require CTB's outreach to you, the System Test Coordinator, during processing. This is not a trivial task given the number of documents to be processed.

Below are some specific steps to take in this regard:
- As you receive scoreable materials from each of your schools, **please check <u>each</u> student's answer document to ensure the form is coded correctly**. (Unfortunately, our state has a long and rich history with test form coding omissions.)
- Each school has been provided a School Security Checklist (paper and electronic). To help facilitate the process, we ask that schools complete the checklist, indicating the name of the student next to each test booklet bar code. In the column labeled 'REC'D (BLC Only)' schools can record the form assigned to each student (note that recording the form assigned to each student is not required but strongly suggested; it is critical that the student name be recorded next to the booklet bar code).
- **Please include a copy of the completed School Security Checklist in Box 1 of scoreable materials for each school**, along with the School Group List. Please retain a copy of all School Security Checklists for your records.

Important Considerations for <u>Online</u> Administrations
Access Codes
- While Access Codes can be changed at the local level, we strongly advise that schools use the Access Code provided by CTB through the TAS.
- Access Codes cannot exceed ten (10) characters. Access Codes in excess of 10 characters will result in students being unable to connect (471 Error), requiring a call to Customer Service for resolution and resulting in a delay.

Assigning the Screen Reader
- It is necessary to click "Allow Screen Reader" in *Student Management/Edit Student* <u>BEFORE</u> assigning the designated Screen Reader test form.
- If this order is not followed, the assignment of the designated Screen Reader form will not be saved as intended for student use.

Preventing English Language Arts (ELA) Section 3 from "Timing Out"
- During the first two weeks of the EOG state testing window, we have had reports of students' sessions timing out during ELA Section 3.
- The cause of these instances appears to be that, while drafting and planning, some students are not interacting with the computer.
- As is standard protocol in the test delivery system, student tests are set to time-out after 20 minutes of inactivity as a test security measure.
- We suggest that Examiners monitor students proactively and gently remind a student, as needed, to move their mouse periodically to prevent this from occurring.

Resetting Student Test Sessions
- As discussed in our School and System Test Coordinator's Manuals, student status during online testing can be reset locally.
- However, if you encounter challenges in taking this action locally, please do not delay having your schools contact CTB Customer Service for assistance. The phone number for Customer Service is (866) 282-2249.

Please contact Melissa Fincher, Ph.D., GaDOE Deputy Superintendent for Assessment & Accountability, at 404-651-9405 or mfincher@doe.k12.ga.us with questions.

GaDOE Charter Division Training

The GaDOE Charter Schools Division will hold a training on Friday, May 1st from 9 a.m. 3 p.m. in the Georgia Department of Education's State Board Room on the 20th floor of the East Tower. All are welcome, but the training will be most beneficial for start-up charter schools and schools that received a Charter School Program grant. To attend, RSVP here.

Agenda

9am – 9:10am	Welcome and Introductions	
9:10am – 9:50am	Michael Campbell, Facilities Management	"Navigating the Facilities Process"
9:50am- 10:40am	Terence Washington, Finance and Budgeting	"Navigating the CSP Budget and Invoice Submissions Process"
10:40am-12am	Randy Phillips and Carly Ambler, Titles I and II	"Charter Schools and Titles I and II"
12pm-1pm	Lunch	
1pm – 1:45pm	Kathy Gidden, Special Education	"Special Education Basics for Charter Schools"
1:45pm – 2pm	Break	
2pm – 2:45pm	Cori Alston, ESOL	"The Non-Negotiables in Serving Public School English Learners"
2:45pm – 3:30pm	Michael Thaler, 21st Century Learning Centers	"21st Century Learning Centers Info Session"

Please contact Aarti Sharma, GaDOE Charter Schools Division Director, at 404-656-0027 or asharma@doe.k12.ga.us with questions.

GaDOE Student Learning Objectives Webinar

SLOs and GAA/Alternate SLO & GNETS
Join us for a webinar on Apr 30, 2015 at 10:00 AM EDT.
Register now!
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8935339938291446529
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.
View System Requirements

Please contact Michele Purvis, GaDOE Evaluation System Specialist, via email or at (404) 232-1537 or with questions.

GaDOE Equity Webinars

Per the Title II, Part A Handbook, LEA Equity Plans are due **June 10, 2015**. As in the past, FY16 LEA Equity Plan will need to be submitted in Project EQ, which is an online equity resource developed for LEAs to share their work in equity, http://eq.gapsc.org/EQ_ProjectSearch.aspx. Since the Equity Plan is part of the annual LEA Title II, Part A plan, it must be based on the completion of an annual needs assessment.

To assist schools with this important work, the following resources are available:

1) The Equity Plan template that includes the LEA Self-Review of System Equity Plan and Poor And Minority Student Equity Rubric on the Title II, Part A website, http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Teacher-and-Leader-Effectiveness/Documents/Title%20II%2c%20Part%20A%20Documents/Resources/FY16%20Title%20II%2c%20Part%20A%20Equity%20Rubric.pdf

2) An Equity Plan Webinar that will provide information on Project EQ and the development of the FY16 Equity Plan. Schools should participate in one of the following Webinars.

Date	Time	Registration Information
April 24, 2015	10:00 – 11:00 AM	**Registration URL:** https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3004569818879492097 **Webinar ID:** 101-783-211 *A confirmation email will be sent with individual login information following your registration.*
May 7, 2015	2:00 – 3:00 PM	**Registration URL:** https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2278264324561865473 **Webinar ID:** 157-874-219 *A confirmation email will be sent with individual login information following your registration.*

Each LEA should have an approved Equity Plan prior to the submission of the FY16 CLIP as information from the approved Equity Plan will be used in several of the descriptors in the CLIP. The FY16 CLIP cannot be approved by Title II, Part A until the LEA has an approved Equity Plan.

Please direct questions to Carly Ambler, GaDOE Education Program Specialist at 404.623.9599 or cambler@doe.k12.ga.us.

State Charter Collaborative Communities

The GaDOE has created a schedule of Collaborative Communities for state charter schools in the 2014-15 school year focused on special education. The information presented will assist schools in the five focus areas for implementation of IDEA: the Identification Process, Services and Supports, Student Progress, Parent Engagement, and College and Career Readiness. **Two attendees** may participate from each school. Register at www.mresa.org or contact Raylicia Davis with questions.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION		PARKING
5/6/15	10:00 - 2:00	Chick-Fil-A	5200 Buffington Road Atlanta, Georgia	No Parking Fee

Chick-fil-A will provide a complimentary continental breakfast and lunch.

Funding and Professional Development Opportunities

SCSC staff have identified the following grant and professional development opportunities that may be of benefit to state charters. A list of SCSC-identified ongoing grant opportunities is available [here](#).

Federal Grant Asset Distribution Opportunity
State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

The SCSC on behalf of the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) must redistribute assets purchased by Heritage Preparatory Academy Charter School using federal Charter School Program (CSP) grant funding following the school's closure at the conclusion of the 2014 Fiscal Year. Charter schools that are operating in Georgia in the 2014-2015 school year or have a charter approved by the State Board of Education to operate in the 2015-2016 school year by the application deadline may apply to receive, at no cost, furniture and equipment previously used by Heritage Preparatory Academy Charter School. The application and equipment inventory is attached to this email and is also available on the SCSC website under the Grant Opportunities and Resources tab [here](#). **The deadline to submit applications is May 15, 2015**.

Investing in Innovation (i3) Grant program
U.S. Department of Education

The Investing in Innovation (i3) program published the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) for the 2015 Development competition on March 30, 2015. NIAs for the Validation and Scale-up competitions will be published later this spring. In its sixth round of competition, the i3 program continues its aim to develop and expand practices that accelerate student achievement and prepare every student to succeed in college and their careers.

This year's priorities for the Development grant category are: Improving the Effectiveness of Principals, Improving Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education, Leveraging Technology to Support Instructional Practice and Professional Development, Influencing the Development of Non-Cognitive Factors, and Serving Rural Communities.

To learn more about the i3 grant program and the pre-application process, please visit the i3 site: http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/index.html. Upcoming deadlines are the Notice of Intent to Apply: April 20, 2015 and Transmittal of Development Pre-Applications: April 29, 2015.

Additionally, the i3 program is interested in individuals to serve as peer reviewers for future Investing in Innovation (i3) grant competitions. NOTE: Even if you registered to be a peer reviewer in prior years, we ask that you check your registration to ensure we have current information. The i3 program is interested in peer reviewers from various backgrounds and professions including: PK-12 teachers and principals, college and university educators, educational evaluators, social entrepreneurs, strategy consultants, grant makers, and others with education expertise. Reviewers must have expertise in at least one of the program's priority areas or in educational evaluation. Requirements and registration instructions can be found on the i3 website on the Call for Peer Reviewers page: http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/peerreviewcall.html.

Board Bank Training – Atlanta
Georgia Charter Schools Association

As the charter school community grows, so does the need for founding board members with the critical skills required to steer charters schools from mission development, through petition submission, to becoming operational. GCSA is pleased to offer a free training on Saturday, April 25, 2015, 9:00 am to noon. The location will be announced soon. The training is for individuals who have a heart for education and a desire to serve the charter school community. If you have expertise in education, business, law, human resources, marketing, fundraising, or other specialized fields — or if you have strong community and business ties in a particular community, your service can be invaluable to current or future charter public schools.

The free training will introduce the skills and parameters of charter school board service and can match attendees with schools who would benefit from their skill set. Contact Elisa Falco, 404-837-2973 or efalco@gacharters.org to learn more and please complete this short survey below if you are interested in enrolling.

Race to the Top (RT3)/Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) Summer Conference
Georgia Department of Education and GAEL

The educational initiatives funded by Georgia's Race to the Top (RT3) grant affect every school district in Georgia. The RT3 Implementation Office is again partnering with GAEL to provide important information to school district leaders throughout the state on this important work. To ensure that every district has the opportunity to hear the updates and engage in meaningful discussion about how Georgia can sustain the successful initiatives, RT3 grant funds were included in the scope of work to pay the registration fees for individuals from each district to attend the 2015 Summer GAEL Conference, July 12-July 14, 2015 at the Jekyll Island Convention Center. RT3 will pay the registration fees for up to **five members** from each school district. The recommended designees include the Superintendent, Associate/Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Personnel Director, and two other district or building level leaders. Please complete the registration form and return to Pat Myers pmyers@gael.org. at the GAEL organization. You must email your form no later **than April 3, 2015**.

In addition to a number of outstanding professional learning sessions, GAEL will offer sessions on Teacher and Leader Keys, Changes in Assessments, Merit Pay, Technology for improving instruction, and much more. Please direct questions toward Deborah White, GACIS Executive Director at 706-250-4804 or by email at dwhite@gael.org.

13th Annual Title Program Conference
Georgia Department of Education

Registration for the 13th Annual Title Programs Conference 2015 - **Implementing FY2016 ESEA Changes and Federal Programs Guidance for Better Success** is now open. Register here. Please note that the Homeless Liaison Workshop, Special Education Directors Workshop, Title III Directors Workshop, and the Title I New Directors Workshop are all limited to **one participant** per district.

Homeless Liaison Workshop - June 15, 2015
Special Education Directors Workshop - June 15, 2015 (beginning at 1 p.m.)
Title III, Part A Directors' Meeting – June 16, 2015
Title I New Directors Workshop - June 16, 2015 (beginning at1 p.m.)
Title I Programs Conference - June 17-18, 2015 (ending at noon on the 18th)
Title II, Part A Directors Meeting - June 18-19, 2015 (beginning at 1 p.m. on the 18th and ending at noon the 19th)

The conference hotel site is the **Atlanta Airport Marriott Gateway,** 2020 Convention Center Concourse, College Park, GA 30337 (404) 761-6140. New Title I Directors should register for both the New Directors Workshop and the 13th Annual Title Programs Conference. A new director is defined as a director with **two or less years** of experience as a Title I Director. **If the Title III Director for a system must also attend the Title I New Directors Workshop they may register a second person for the Title III Meeting once they receive clearance from Dr. Randy Phillips** at rphillips@doe.k12.ga.us or (770) 334-8390. Please contact Dr. Phillips with questions.

CharterLeader Summer Bootcamp
Georgia Charter Schools Association

The Georgia Charter Schools Association's (GCSA) CharterLeader program is pleased to announce the CharterLeader "boot camp" which will run from Monday, June 15-Thursday, June 18, 2015. This intensive training will equip current and aspiring leaders in charter schools to develop the skills and core competencies to launch, lead, convert, replicate, and/or expand high quality schools. This is the perfect opportunity for any school administrator or teacher leader to earn 10 Professional Learning Units (PLUs) which will be needed for certification renewal.

This CharterLeader program is unique in the nation, offering charter-specific training to help build a leadership pipeline for Georgia. Modules covered in CharterLeader include: ·Leadership Assessment, Overview, and Best Practices; Establishing School Culture; Teacher Retention and Induction; School Funding & Budgeting; Professional Standards Commission Requirements; Effective Hiring Practices; Leader Keys and Teacher Keys Effectiveness System; Code of Ethics; School Improvement; Professional Development Planning; Governance, Risk Management, and Strategic Planning; Waivers; Legislative Rule update.

Candidates are expected to attend and participate in all cohort meetings and trainings. Candidates are also expected to work collaboratively with their mentors to build capacity in leadership and decision-making. The total program cost is $1,700 per person. Final payment will be due on or before May 29, 2015.

Applications for the 2015 cohort are due by Friday, April 24, 2015. For further information contact WaynicaStaples, Director of Leadership Development & Training, 404-835-8914. All applicants must also complete this survey.

GaDOE Data Collections Conference
Georgia Department of Education

The Georgia Department of Education will host the fifth annual Data Collections Conference on August 26-28, 2015 at the Georgia Department of Education at the Classic Center in Athens, Georgia. The conference mission continues to focus on presenting attendees with a better understanding of state and federal reporting requirements, including any reporting changes for fiscal year 2016. The conference will also provide attendees with information related to the importance of internal data collections and reporting procedures.

Target Audience:
Any individual (SEA, district and school level administrators, and any support staff) accountable for state and federal reporting related to funding, accountability, or education program management is encouraged to attend the conference. The target audience includes any individual with responsibility for collecting, maintaining, reporting, or certifying data at any levels within the school district.

More Information: **http://dcconference.gadoe.org/Pages/Home.aspx**

DonorsChoose.org
Online Fundraising Drive

DonorsChoose.org is an online charity that makes it easy for donors to find meaningful projects to support. Public school teachers from every corner of America post classroom project requests on the website site, and donors can give any amount to the project that most inspires them. Schools can register their own projects at **www.donorschoose.org.**

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