



STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION OF GEORGIA

DECEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

SCSC Meetings

The last monthly State Charter Schools Commission was held on November 18, 2015. The SCSC did not hold a December meeting. The November meeting minutes are available [here](#). The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Board Room. The 2016 Commission meeting calendar is available [on the SCSC website](#).

Training Opportunities

The [2015-2016 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.

Petitioner Boot Camp

January 20, 2016, Macon Marriott Conference Center, Macon, Georgia
Invited: Potential SCSC Petitioners

The Petitioner Boot Camp prepares potential petitioners for the SCSC charter petition process. On the first day, attendees will learn what goes into a successful charter petition, with a specific focus on timeline, legal requirements, and proper board governance. Attendees will also hear directly from existing state charter schools and have the opportunity to ask questions of existing schools and SCSC staff. The SCSC will also offer a series of webinars for petitioners in early 2016 focused on budget preparation and school finance.

Governance Training

Invited: Board Members and Administrators of Operational State Charter Schools
February 10-11, 2016
Atlanta Evergreen Marriott, Stone Mountain, Georgia
www.marriott.com/atlantaevergreen

Georgia law, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2084(f), requires every member of a governing board of a state charter school to participate in annual governing board training. For FY16, state charter school governing board members may fulfill this obligation by one of two methods.

1. State charter school governing board members may attend one of the two governing board training opportunities provided to state charters by the SCSC *at no charge*; or
2. State charter school governing board members *may use their own funds* to contract for a minimum of 12 contact hours of training from a provider that is approved by the State Board of Education to deliver governance training to charter schools. Training content must reflect the topics covered at the SCSC Governance Training. Review the [SCSC Guidance on Governance Training](#) for a complete list of requirements and to ensure compliance.

The SCSC strongly encourages state charter school governing board members to attend one of the governance trainings conducted by the SCSC as these trainings provide board members the unique opportunity to discuss issues and concerns directly with their authorizer. Further, the SCSC staff's unique understanding of the compliance issues facing state charter schools ensures that SCSC training sessions are always topical, relevant, and timely.

The last 2015-2016 SCSC Governance Training date and location is detailed below. Please RSVP to lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov to attend.

**[Charter School Financial Management Certification:
Introductory Government Accounting for Charter Schools](#)**

February 23-25, 2016

Administrative Office of the Courts, 244 Washington Street, 3rd floor, Atlanta, Georgia

The Carl Vinson Institute of Government Charter Schools Financial Management Certification is a six-course series that equips participants with the unique skills and knowledge needed to financially operate a charter school. The Introductory Accounting course will introduce the participant to basic accounting concepts for governmental funds. Topics covered will include the accounting equation, chart of accounts, double entry accounting, accounting systems and records, fund accounting, basis of accounting, and payroll and benefit accounting. Find more information, including the full course calendar, [here](#).

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 December and January:

- **Other:** Second Semester SLO Submission opens closes December 18; Superintendent's Test Certification; Second Semester SLO Window Reopens for Target Adjustment Based on Pre-Assessment Data
- **Data Collections:** Pre-ID; Student Record-Data Cleanse; Special Education Transition Planning

The [FY16 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.

[Facilities Guidance](#)

The SCSC has published a new guidance document on facilities for state charter schools, entitled “Facility Selection: General Guidance and Considerations.” This guidance is available [on the SCSC website](#). Please direct questions to Morgan Felts, SCSC Associate Counsel and Petitions Manager at morgan.felts@scsc.georgia.gov or (404) 656-2837.

[State Charter Academic Achievement Awards Program Honors](#)

Congratulations to Fulton Leadership Academy and Pataula Charter Academy for being named Title I Reward Schools and to Coweta Charter Academy as a Title I Reward District by the Georgia Department of Education Academic Achievement Awards Program. This program honors and rewards K-12 Title I schools and school districts for significant progress in improving student achievement and/or making significant progress in closing the achievement gaps. More information about the program is available [here](#).

[Carl Vinson Financial Management Program Graduates](#)

Congratulations to the first graduating cohort of the Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG) Financial Management Certification Program. The graduates were recognized at the December State Board of Education Charter Committee meeting. The CVIOG Charter Financial Management Certification is a six course program that equips participants with the unique skills and knowledge needed to financially operate a charter school. The first graduating class included representatives from six state charter schools, including **Kimberly Allen, Georgia Connections Academy; Barbara Hall; Fulton Leadership Academy; Katie Harris, Charter Conservatory for Liberal Arts and Technology; Brenda Messer, Georgia Cyber Academy; Beverly Moore; Georgia Cyber Academy; Erica Jones, Ivy Preparatory Academy; and Candy Yu, Graduation Achievement Charter High School**. More information about the program is available [here](#).



Kimberly Allen from Georgia Connections Academy receives her certificate from David Lakly of the Carl Vinson Institute and Brian Burdette, Chair of the State Board of Education Charter Committee (photography by Roger Nielson of CVIOG).

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](#).

Community Grant Program The Walmart Foundation

The Community Grant Program, available through the Walmart Foundation, awards grants to support the needs of communities ranging from \$250-\$2500. More information is available [here](#). Applications are due December 31, 2015.

The Fishman Prize The New Teacher Project

The Fishman Prize for Superlative Classroom practice is an award for teachers in high-poverty public schools with exceptional classroom practices. Four winners will each receive \$25,000 and be eligible to participate in a summer residency program. More information about the prize is available [here](#). Applications are due January 5, 2016.

13th Annual Georgia Charter Schools Conference Georgia Charter Schools Association

The Georgia Charter Schools Conference is the only statewide gathering of the entire Georgia charter schools community. The 13th annual conference will be held at the Atlanta Marriott Century Center from February 3-5, 2016. GCSA welcomes charter school leaders, governing board members, authorizers, business partners, petitioners, teachers, and business managers to gather and learn about new programs, products, and techniques as well as share best practices and network.

GCSA is currently accepting Presentation Proposals. In addition to useful breakout sessions and inspiring keynote addresses, GCSA will celebrate a Charter School Teacher and Leader of the Year. More information is available [here](#).

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.

Get Georgia Reading Campaign

This campaign is geared toward getting all of Georgia's children on a path to third grade reading proficiency by 2020. The campaign unites public and private partners to pursue language, literacy, development, and sustainability to reach this goal. Get involved or read more about the initiative [here](#).