

CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION MEETING

February 28, 2018, 10:00 a.m.

Georgia Department of Community Supervision Conference Room
East Twin Tower, 8th Floor, Atlanta, GA 30334

Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Williams at approximately 10:02 am.
2. Commissioners Tony Lowden, Clara Keith, Carmen Dill, Jimmy Hogg, Jose Perez, and Paul Williams, and staff members, Bonnie Holliday—Executive Director, Gregg Stevens—Deputy Director and General Counsel, Morgan Felts—Associate General Counsel and Petitions Manager, Kristen Easterbrook—Business Manager, Katie Manthey—Academic Accountability Manager, Rennie Laryea—Organizational Development Manager, Sarah Beck – Operational Accountability Manager, Terence Washington – Financial Accountability Manager, and Lauren Holcomb—Chief Communications Officer were present.
3. Approximately 55 members of the public were also present, including charter school staff and representatives, families of students attending state charter schools, charter school business representatives, and Georgia Charter Schools Association representatives.
4. Vice Chairman Williams called for an approval of the meeting minutes from the SCSC January 31, 2018 meeting. Commissioner Perez made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Lowden provided a second. The minutes were unanimously approved.
5. Next, Vice Chairman Williams asked Ms. Rennie Laryea to provide an organizational development update. The SCSC held its final governance training for the 2017-2018 academic school year. It was held on February 8-9, 2018 at the Lake Lanier Legacy Lodge in Buford, Georgia. The New Schools Orientation is scheduled for March 20, 2018. Lastly, the FY18 training and support calendar is available on SCSC website.
6. Vice Chairman Williams then asked Director Holliday to provide a legislative update. HB 787 is sponsored by Representative Scott Hilton. It will increase state charter school funding, raise the state charter supplement (to the average of the state local supplement amount from the bottom 5% amount), provide forward funding for horizontal growth, and allow state charter schools to receive RESA services. HB 787 crossed over from the Georgia House to the Georgia Senate. HB 908 is sponsored by Representative Robert Dickey. It allows the SCSC and local charter schools to allow charter schools to enroll students over 20 years of age. Such charter schools will receive funding for overaged students. HB 908 has passed out of committee but not the full House.
7. Vice Chairman Williams called upon Ms. Morgan Felts to discuss the staff recommendations for the 2018 state charter school renewals. Vice Chairman Williams also asked if anyone signed up for public comment regarding the state charter schools up for renewal.

8. The SCSC staff recommendation for Atlanta Heights Charter School is a three-year charter renewal. No one signed up for public comment; however, representatives from Atlanta Heights Charter School thanked the SCSC staff for their commitment and investment to the school. Vice Chairman Williams called for a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a three-year charter contract renewal for Atlanta Heights Charter School. Commissioner Lowden made a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a three-year charter contract renewal for Atlanta Heights Charter School. The motion was seconded by Keith. The motion passed unanimously.
9. The SCSC staff recommendation for Cherokee Charter Academy is a five-year charter renewal. No one signed up for public comment; however, the school leader from Cherokee Charter Academy discussed her excitement regarding the academic progress of the school. Vice Chairman Williams called for a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a five-year charter contract renewal for Cherokee Charter School. Commissioner Hogg made a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a five-year charter contract renewal for Cherokee Charter Academy and Keith provided a second. The motion passed unanimously.
10. The SCSC staff recommendation for Coweta Charter Academy is a five-year charter term. No one signed up for public comment; however, the school leader spoke about the school's academic progress. Vice Chairman Williams called for a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a five-year charter contract renewal for Coweta Charter Academy. Commissioner Lowden made a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a five-year charter contract renewal for Coweta Charter Academy. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hogg. The motion passed unanimously.
11. The SCSC staff recommendation for Fulton Leadership Academy (FLA) is a five-year charter term. Josh Ekong, a FLA student signed up for public comment and discussed his post-secondary goals, his experiences at FLA, and thanked the SCSC staff for their support. The FLA Board Chair, Barbara Hall thanked the SCSC commission and staff for their support. Next, three FLA students introduced themselves to the SCSC commissioners and staff. Vice Chairman Williams called for a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a five-year charter contract renewal for FLA. Commissioner Tony Lowden made a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a five-year charter contract term renewal for FLA. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hogg. The motion passed unanimously.
12. The SCSC staff recommendation for Georgia Connections Academy is a three-year charter term. Sharon Daniel, parent of a Georgia Connections Academy student, spoke on the quality of the school. Deitra Poindexter, a learning coach and parent of a Georgia Connections Academy student, discussed the special education services the school provides. Heather Robinson, the Georgia Connections Academy school leader, thanked the SCSC staff and commissioners for their assistance. Vice Chairman Williams called for a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a three-year charter contract renewal for Georgia Connections Academy. Commissioner Lowden made a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a three-year charter contract term renewal for Georgia Connections Academy. Commissioner Keith provided a second. The motion passed unanimously.
13. The SCSC staff recommendation for Ivy Preparatory Academy at Gwinnett is a three-year charter term. Jacob Cole, Ivy Preparatory Academy's chief of staff and director of operations, thanked

the SCSC staff and commissioners and clarified the school's request for a transition year. Vice Chairman Williams called for a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a three-year charter contract renewal for Ivy Preparatory Academy at Gwinnett. Commissioner Lowden made a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a three-year charter contract term renewal for Ivy Preparatory Academy at Gwinnett. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith. The motion passed unanimously.

14. The SCSC staff recommendation for Ivy Preparatory Academy at Kirkwood is a three-year charter term. Jacob Cole, director of operations at Ivy Preparatory Academy, thanked the SCSC staff and commissioners for their support. Vice Chairman Williams called for a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a three-year charter contract renewal for Ivy Preparatory Academy at Kirkwood. Commissioner Lowden made a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a three-year charter contract term renewal for Ivy Preparatory Academy at Kirkwood. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith. The motion was passed unanimously.
15. The SCSC staff recommendation for Pataula Charter Academy is a five-year charter term. Vice Chairman Williams called for a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a five-year charter contract renewal for Pataula Charter Academy. Commissioner Lowden made a motion to confirm the SCSC staff recommendation for a five-year charter contract term renewal for Pataula Charter Academy. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Felts provided a summary of a statement provided by representatives of Pataula Charter Academy. The school thanks the SCSC staff and commissioners for their support. The school's priority is the development of a marketing plan. Director Holliday noted Pataula Charter Academy's ability to fulfill its goal of becoming the highest performer academically at the local level and the school's long-term goal of becoming the highest performer academically at the state level. Commissioner Lowden further spoke to Pataula Charter Academy's demonstration of academic excellence.
16. Vice Chairman Williams asked if the SCSC commissioners had any additional comments. Director Holliday provided an explanation of the state charter schools renewal process. Dr. Holliday emphasized that state charter schools earn charter contract renewals and are not renewed by pleas of mercy. For transparency, Dr. Holliday discussed Graduation Achievement Charter High School's withdrawal from the 2018 renewal process as the reason for the SCSC commissioners and staff school not considering the school for renewal. Commissioner Lowden spoke to the contractual obligation of a state charter contract, the commitment a state charter school has with the student, and the expectation of the SCSC's performance metric.
17. Vice Chairman Williams asked if anyone signed up for public comment. Rina Moses, a member of the PTA at Ivy Preparatory Academy, discussed her disappointment regarding the closing of the school for a gap year. Beth McCamy, parent of a Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) student, discussed the importance of virtual education and her support in keeping GCA open. Susan Edwards, a parent of a GCA student, discussed her support in keeping GCA open. Colleen Sieber, a learning coach for a GCA student, discussed the academic supports GCA provides her son. Alisha Cromartie, Ivy Preparatory Academy's school leader, thanked the SCSC commissioners and staff for their assistance. Ms. Cromartie also addressed the difficult decisions made at the Ivy Preparatory Academy Gwinnett's campus as the best interest of the school's scholars.

18. Next, Vice Chairman Williams made an announcement. Beginning in April 2018, the SCSC meetings will be held in the State Board room located on the 20th floor of the East Twin Tower. Additional information will become available on the SCSC website.
19. Director Holliday also made an announcement. The upcoming CPF accountability presentation is scheduled for the March 2018 meeting. State charter schools will have the opportunity to conduct school presentations on academic accountability in upcoming SCSC meetings. Furthermore, annual budget presentations will begin at the June 2018 SCSC meetings.
20. Vice Chairman Williams called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Keith made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Lowden provided a second. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:14am.

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