



# STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION OF GEORGIA

## FEBRUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

*The SCSC is on Twitter! Make sure you are following us [@SCSCGa](#)! We share pertinent news, information on trainings, highlights from our schools and other things that you may want to know!*

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### SCSC Meetings

The last monthly State Charter Schools Commission was held on January 27, 2016. The January meeting minutes are available [here](#). The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 24, 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](#).

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### 2016 Petition Cycle

The application for the 2016 petition cycle is tentatively scheduled to be released on February 24<sup>th</sup>, pending Commission approval at the February SCSC meeting.

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### SCSC Receives Perfect Score on National Authorizer Assessment

The State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia (SCSC) received 12 out of 12 points on the National Association of Charter School Authorizer's Index of Essential Practices (Index), an annual assessment of charter school authorizer quality. The SCSC is one of only two charter school authorizers in Georgia and 31 charter school authorizers nationally to receive a perfect score. 161 authorizers across the nation were assessed.

"As a relatively new authorizer, the SCSC has worked quickly and diligently to ensure that we authorize quality charter schools that will give Georgia students the best possible chance for academic success," said SCSC Chair Jennifer Rippner. "We are pleased to be recognized by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers for our practices."

NACSA's work focuses on the establishment of effective charter school policy and charter authorizing procedures that lead to quality public schools. In 2011, NACSA began publishing the Index, outlining the progress of authorizers in adopting 12 Essential Practices which are critical to fulfilling the responsibilities of an authorizer. These practices include the use of expert panels that include external members to review charter applications; requiring and/or examining annual, independent financial audits of charter schools; and providing an annual report to each school on its performance; among others. More information about NACSA and the Index of Essential Practices is available [here](#).

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## 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](mailto:lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov) if you wish to attend a training session.

### 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](#).

### Petitioner Webinar Series

**March 2, 2016 at 2 p.m. - Overview of the 2016 Petition Application**

**March 9, 2016 at 2 p.m. - Funding and Budget Template Review**

**March 16, 2016 at 2 p.m. - Creating Sound Financial Policies**

The Petitioner Webinar series is designed to prepared potential petitioners for the 2016 charter petition process. Participants will learn about the 2016 petition application, the state charter funding formula and petition budget template, and creating sound financial policies. Final dates and access information will be shared following the approval of the 2016 Petition Application by the SCSC.

### Governance Training

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 had the opportunity to participate in SCSC-provided training at no cost, or to seek alternate training using their own funds. As the opportunity to participate in SCSC provided governance training has now expired, state charter board members must fulfill the obligation through the following method.

1. 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.

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.

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## Reporting Deadlines

The following reporting items are due in February and March:

- **SCSC:** Tentative release for 2016 SCSC petition application – February 24

- **Other:** SLO Statements Visible in the Platform
- **Data Collections:** CPI; FTE; Student Class- Class Size; Student Record

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](mailto: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.*

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## Financial Efficiency Star Rating

The Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) in coordination with GaDOE is required to create an annual financial efficiency rating. The Financial Efficiency Star Rating is based on a three-year average of the Per Pupil Expenditures (PPE) as compared to the average CCRPI Scores for each district and each school. The implementation of this rating will be staggered into two phases. The state will publically release the district rating first, and will provide individual school ratings to the districts for informational purposes. School ratings will be publically released the following year. The state believes this will give districts the time necessary to analyze these data and ensure all expenditures are reasonably allocated to each school within the district.

The state will release district PPE calculations for FY 2013, FY 2014, and FY 2015 within the password-protected GaDOE portal later this month. While data for both districts and schools will be available in the portal for review, only the district PPE expenditures will be reported on the CCRPI page when the 2015 CCRPI scores are released.

Districts may respond or provide information related to their respective ratings on the public-facing website displaying the efficiency rating. The state believes this allows districts to fully explain these data to their constituents, and to identify any additional information that a consumer of these data should take into consideration.

If you have questions or need additional information related to this initiative, please contact the GaDOE Financial Review division.

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## 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](#).*

### **Innovation in K-8 Mathematics and/or K-12 Computer Science/Coding Professional Learning Grants** **Governor's Office of Student Achievement**

Governor Deal has recently made funds available to support the priority areas of Applied Learning with a Focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Education and Teacher and Leader Development for High Need Schools through a professional learning grant opportunity. The Governor's Office of Student Achievement is offering an 18-month grant in the areas of K-8 Mathematics and/or K-12 Computer Science/Coding to develop and implement high-quality, innovative professional learning models or products to impact instruction in one or both of these disciplines.

All applicants are **required** to participate in a Technical Assistance Day prior to submitting an application for this grant opportunity. Upcoming technical assistance days are scheduled at the locations below:

- February 17, 2016 – Okefenokee RESA, Waycross, Georgia
  - [Register now for Okefenokee site.](#)
- February 26, 2016 – Middle Georgia RESA, Warner Robins, Georgia
  - [Register now for Middle GA site.](#)

To learn more about this opportunity, visit GOSA's website [here](#). If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Stacey Lutz, Program Manager for RESA Professional Learning Grants and Contracts, or Dr. Cayanna Good, Deputy Director of Innovations and Academic Strategy, at [stacey.lutz@georgia.gov](mailto:stacey.lutz@georgia.gov) or [cgood@georgia.gov](mailto:cgood@georgia.gov).

### **Job Fair Georgia Charter Schools Association**

GCSA will offer two job fair opportunities to assist in filling charter school vacancies in the 2016-17 school year. The first will take place in Macon on **Saturday, March 5 in Macon** from 12 p.m.-3 p.m. The second will be held on **Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup> in Atlanta** at Drew Charter School, 301 East Lake Blvd SE, Atlanta, GA 30317. Register for the Atlanta session [here](#) and contact Jhanelle Adams with questions at 404-835-8915 or [jadams@gacharters.org](mailto:jadams@gacharters.org).

### **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](http://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](#).

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