

STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION INTERVIEW PANEL MEETING

January 25, 2018, 10:20 a.m.

**State Charter Schools Commission Conference Room
East Twin Tower, Room 1470B, Atlanta, Georgia 30334**

Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting convened at approximately 10:27 am. The interview panel, consisted of Commissioner Jose Perez, Commissioner Tom Lewis and Commissioner Jimmy Hogg; Executive Director Bonnie Holliday, Gregg Stevens—General Counsel, Morgan Felts—Associate General Counsel and Petitions Manager, Terence Washington—Financial Accountability Manager, and Katie Manthey—Academic Accountability Manager. Representatives of the Georgia Charter Schools Association (GCSA) and members of the public were also present.
2. The interview panel met with representatives of Georgia Connections Academy. The interview panel questioned the school's governing board to determine their possibility of renewal. The panel discussed academic, financial and operational accountability to determine whether the school's existing and evolving structures would allow the school to achieve stability in the near future. The representatives from Connections highlighted their plan to shift from serving K-12 students to serving 6-12 students and used academic and financial accountability to support their decision. The school plans to pull resources towards grades 6-12, maintain elementary teachers with middle school certification, and add 200-300 students in middle school every year, and make other operational adjustments as needed.
3. At approximately 1:20 pm the interview panel met to discuss the possibility of charter renewal for Atlanta Heights Charter School. The interview panel questioned the school on their academic progress as well as their efforts to improve alignment with state standards. Representatives from Atlanta Heights felt that their academic scores are on a positive trajectory and that they have made institutional changes to help maintain that progress. The panel also discussed Atlanta Height's need for autonomy when it comes to their relationship with their management company.
4. The Commission expects to distribute recommendation letters regarding charter renewals on February 7, 2018 and post recommendation letters on February 21, 2018. The Commission will meet to vote on recommendations on February 28, 2018.
5. The interview concluded at approximately 2:30 pm.