



State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia (SCSC)

January Newsletter

SCSC Meetings

The State Charter Schools Commission did not meet in December. The January Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. in the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Board Room. The 2014 Commission meeting calendar is available [here](#).

Accountability News: SCC Value-Added Analysis

In 2013, the SCSC engaged the state's academic accountability agency—the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA)—to assess the performance of SCSC approved charter schools by leveraging its extensive expertise in evaluating educational programs throughout the state. GOSA contracted with Dr. Tim Sass of Georgia State University, a well-regarded authority in value-added measures, to develop the analytical framework and data analysis. The report is scheduled to be completed in February 2013 and will evaluate state charter performance by using a "value-added" model (VAM) of student achievement which includes statistical controls for observable student characteristics and prior academic performance. Typically, these student characteristics include factors like free/reduced-price lunch eligibility (a proxy for family income), English language learner status, and disability status; however, race, gender and age were also taken into account in some cases because they produced statistically significant effects.

The VAM approach has been used by academic researchers to study the impact of charter schools in many jurisdictions including Arizona (Solmon, Paark & Garcia (2001)), Florida (Sass (2006)), North Carolina (Bifulco and Ladd (2006)) and Texas (Booker, et al. (2007)). It is also being used to evaluate teacher performance in Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee and Washington, DC. In essence, the VAM predicts what a student's test score would be based on his/her prior test scores and demographic characteristics. The difference between the actual and predicted current test score is a measure of the educational entity's contribution to student achievement. In the context of school-level evaluations, the estimated effect for a school is essentially the difference between actual and predicted test score for each student, averaged over all students in a school.

Once the report findings are finalized in February, SCSC staff will share school-level results with governing board members and school leaders.

For additional information about the report, please contact Bonnie Holliday, SCSC Executive Director, at bonnie.holliday@scsc.georgia.gov or (404) 656-2837.

Training Opportunities

The following training sessions have been scheduled. To attend a training opportunity, please RSVP to lauren.wright@scsc.georgia.gov.

Charter Petitioner Boot Camp

Georgia Tech Hotel and Conference Center, Atlanta, Georgia

January 27, 2014

This single day training session is for **interested charter petitioners**. SCSC staff will discuss ways in which stakeholders can develop a strong charter petition, focusing on school budget, curriculum and accountability, and community engagement.

Teacher and Leader Keys Effectiveness Systems (TKES and LKES)

Georgia Department of Education, Atlanta, Georgia

March 26-28, 2014 (TKES) and April 14-15, 2014 (LKES)

This training session is for **state charter leaders and governing board members**. All state charters are required to implement the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) and the Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES) in the 2014-15 school year, GaDOE trainers will review the evaluation system and participants will become credentialed to conduct evaluations. At a minimum, two individuals per school should be credentialed to conduct TKES evaluations and two individuals per school should be credentialed to conduct LKES evaluations. School leaders should evaluate teachers and governing board members should evaluate the school leader.

A comprehensive list of 2013-2014 SCSC training opportunities is available [here](#). Please note this is a draft list to assist schools in planning and dates/topics are subject to change. For questions about training opportunities, please contact Lauren Wright, SCSC Director of Organizational and Resource Development, at lauren.wright@scsc.georgia.gov or (404) 656-2822.

Reporting Deadlines

Please note the upcoming reporting items due in **January and February**:

Superintendent's Test Certification - Fall (deadline 1/31/14)

Data Collection - Student Class - Rosters, Pre-ID

A full list of FY14 reporting items and associated deadlines can be found [here](#). For questions about reporting deadlines, please contact Terence Washington, SCSC Accountability Manager, at terence.washington@scsc.georgia.gov or (404) 656-2837.

GaDOE Charter Division News

Charter Schools Annual Report: The GaDOE Charter Division presented the Charter Schools Annual Report to the State Board of Education. The report is available [here](#).

Letter of Intent Deadline: February 1 is the deadline for start-up charter school applicants to submit a Letter of Intent that they plan to submit a locally-approved charter petition to the State Board of Education by the August 1 deadline. A sample is available [here](#).

For additional information about these items, contact Louis Erste, GaDOE Associate Superintendent for Policy and Charter Schools, at lerste@doe.k12.ga.us or (404) 651-8734.

Funding and Networking Opportunities

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

Georgia Charter Schools Leadership Conference Georgia Charter Schools Association

The Georgia Charter Schools Leadership Conference is the only statewide gathering of the entire Georgia charter school leadership community. The GCSA upcoming conference will be held January 30th-31st at Lake Oconee Academy in Greensboro, Georgia. Attendees will include charter school leaders, governing boards, petitioners and business managers from across the state.

Some of the highlights include an opportunity to hear from at least six of the candidates running for State Superintendent and a panel discussing innovations in charters. The panel will be moderated by Lou Erste and consist of a representative from a start-up charter school, conversion charter school, charter system, charter cluster, state virtual charter school, and college and career academies.

GCSA will also announce the 2014 Charter School of the Year. This school will receive a \$50,000 grant from The Coca-Cola Company to support their mission and efforts. Additionally, the conference will offer 15 breakout sessions from What Autonomy Can Look Like at Your School to a CCRPI Primer for Charter Schools.

Visit www.gacharterleadershipconference.org for more information and to register.

Contact: Rena Youngblood at ryoungblood@gacharters.org.

2014 COSEBOC School Awards Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color (COSEBOC)

The COSEBOC School Awards are designed to celebrate schools demonstrating success in educating boys and young men of color. This year the COSEBOC School Awards will be focused on schools educating pre-K through 6th grade students. COSEBOC Award-winning schools will receive a \$10,000 unrestricted grant and their promising practices will be featured at the Gathering of Leaders, April 24-26, 2014, in Jackson, Mississippi.

In addition to focusing on preK-6th grade schools, this year's process has been streamlined to facilitate applicants. The [application, guidelines and forms](#) are available on the COSEBOC website. Interested schools should review the guidelines and complete the application process by January 20, 2014.

Contact: Mitzi Dorbu, mdorbu@coseboc.org or 1-855-COSEBOC, Ext 7

Charter School Start-up Grants

Walton Family Foundation

The Georgia Charter Schools Association is now accepting applications on behalf of the Walton Family Foundation (WFF) for the next round of WFF charter school start-up grants. The Walton Family Foundation funds charter schools serving the Atlanta Public School System that have a high population of economically disadvantaged students.

Interested groups must first complete an eligibility form, which can be found at:

<http://waltonfamilyfoundation.org/educationreform/eligibilityform>.

If a group is deemed eligible and is invited to apply, GCSA will be in contact with them and will provide access at that time to the application portal. For more information about the Charter School Startup Grant Program through The Walton Family Foundation, visit: <http://www.waltonfamilyfoundation.org/grantees/public-charter-startup-grant-program>.

Deadline: February 28, 2014

##