



# STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION OF GEORGIA

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## JULY 2015 NEWSLETTER

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### SCSC Meetings

The last monthly State Charter Schools Commission was a called meeting held on June 24, 2015 via conference call to discuss the SCSC operational budget. The meeting minutes are available [here](#). The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 29, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. in the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Board Room. The 2015 Commission meeting calendar is available [on the SCSC website](#).

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### 2015 Petition Cycle

Applications for the 2015 petition cycle were due in May. Petition review panels comprised of SCSC staff and expert third party reviewers in the fields of finance, education, law, and policy will review eligible petitions, interview petitioners, and make recommendations for approval or denial to the SCSC over the summer. The SCSC is expected to vote on recommendations in August and September.

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### Annual Governance Training Requirement

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. The SCSC will pilot a program in Fiscal Year 2016 whereby 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 2015-2016 SCSC Governance Training dates and locations are below. Please RSVP to [lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov](mailto:lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov) to attend.

**November 4-5, 2015\***  
**The Lodge at Little Ocmulgee State Park**  
**Helena, Georgia**  
<http://www.littleocmulgeelodge.com/>

**February 10-11, 2016**  
**Atlanta Evergreen Marriott**  
**Stone Mountain, Georgia**  
[www.marriott.com/atlantaevergreen](http://www.marriott.com/atlantaevergreen)

*\*Space is limited. Attendees who wish to attend this session are encouraged to RSVP early.*

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## Training Opportunities

The [2015-2016 SCSC Training Agenda](#) is now 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 Schools Financial Management Certification Program

**Internal Controls and Writing Financial Policies**

**July 29-July30**

**Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts, Atlanta, Georgia**

**Invited: School Business Managers and Administrators**

The SCSC will offer a full scholarship to state charter business managers and/or administrators who wish to enroll in the Carl Vinson Institute of Government's Charter Schools Financial Management Certification Program. Courses must be completed within a three-year period. The Internal Controls course will introduce the participant to the five components of internal controls: control environment, risk assessment, control activities, information and communication and monitoring. Discussion will include the importance of internal controls for charter schools including high risk areas charter schools should consider. The Writing Financial Policies course will focus on the policies important to charter schools including Accounting and Financial Reporting, Budget, Revenue, Expenditures, Fund Balance, Capital Asset, Cash and Investments, and Purchasing. Visit the SCSC website to see the [full program overview and the 2015-16 course schedule](#).

### TKES/LKES Credentialing Training

**August 4, 5, 6, 7**

**The GaDOE West Tower Training Room A (10<sup>th</sup> Floor)**

**Atlanta, Georgia**

**9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. each day**

This training session will provide initial training and credentialing for new personnel at new and existing state charter schools. State charters should send the individuals from their schools who will be charged with conducting TKES/LKES evaluations to this training. The SCSC recommends that at least two individuals become credentialed to conduct TKES evaluations (evaluations of teachers) and that two individuals become credentialed to conduct LKES evaluations (evaluations of school leaders). Generally, school administrators are charged with conducting TKES evaluations, and the principal and a board member are charged with conducting LKES evaluations. The SCSC has created a TKES/LKES guidance document for state charters that may address your questions, available [here](#).

**August 4, 5, 6 (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) - TKES Training for individuals who will evaluate teachers**  
**August 7 (Friday) - LKES Training for individuals who will evaluate school leaders**

**[Financial System Review](#)**  
**Georgia Charter Schools Association**  
**Individualized Sessions with Schools**

The SCSC will once again offer Financial System Review services led by the Georgia Charter Schools Association (GCSA) to state charter schools that did not receive the service last year. For schools that take advantage of this opportunity, Elisa Falco from GCSA will work with the school leader and financial management team to conduct an in-depth financial system review. The review will assist schools in establishing or improving effective internal controls, implementing best practices for accounting practices and procedures, and will provide schools with an assessment of fiscal health. The two-part review includes an analysis of the school's internal controls and an analysis of the school's budget. More detailed information is available [here](#).

**[Strategic Planning with the Governing Board](#)**  
**Carl Vinson Institute of Government**  
**Individualized Sessions with Schools**

The SCSC will once again offer individualized strategic planning sessions with facilitators from the Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG) to state charter school boards and staffs that did not receive the service last year. A CVIOG facilitator will work with the governing board chair to conduct a one-day retreat for individual state charter school boards and assist the board in developing an executable strategic plan. The facilitator will work closely with the board chair to customize the process to meet the school's needs. The opportunity will also include two check-in meetings with the facilitator. More detailed information is available [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.*

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**[Reporting Deadlines](#)**

The following reporting items are due in July and August:

- **Title Programs:** Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan; Flexible Learning Program plan
- **Gender Equity Report**
- **Superintendent's Test Certification** - Spring
- **Data Collections:** CPI, Special Education – Disproportionality, Special Education – Preschool Exist Data, Special Education – Postsecondary Outcomes, Special Education – Timelines, Special Education – Continuation of Services

The [FY15 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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## SCSC Guidance

The SCSC has published an updated version of [Legal Obligations of a State Charter School](#) guidance available on the SCSC website. This version provides greater clarity regarding high school graduation requirements and incorporates changes in law occurring as a result of legislation recently signed into law – such as the phase out of the Georgia High School Graduation Test and the Utopian bill related to facilities.

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### US Ed Approval of Georgia's ESEA Flexibility Waiver Renewal

The United State Department of Education (US Ed) has approved Georgia's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver renewal. The approval is for three years - through the end of the 2017-2018 school year. The waiver includes a new methodology for the identification of Priority and Focus schools. The identifications have been aligned with the CCRPI reports, using both the Content Mastery and Achievement Gap components of three years of CCRPI reports. This method was chosen to improve transparency and ease in replication of the calculations for identifying and exiting Priority and Focus Schools.

The new lists of the 2015 Priority and Focus Schools, as well as a more detailed explanation of the identification criteria, are available in the secure portal. Schools that were on the 2012 Priority and Focus Schools lists that are not included on the 2015 lists have been exited.

The information can be accessed by logging into the MyGaDOE portal, hovering over the CCRPI link, and clicking on the Priority, Focus, and Rewards Schools link.

The CCRPI Accountability Team will continue to support schools and districts regarding CCRPI reports, data, and calculations. The contact information for the Accountability Specialists can be found at the following link: <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Accountability/Pages/default.aspx>

*Please contact Melissa Fincher, Ph.D., GaDOE Deputy Superintendent for Assessment & Accountability at [mfincher@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:mfincher@doe.k12.ga.us) with questions .*

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### GaDOE CCRPI Post-Data Collections

The **post-data collection** for the 2015 CCRPI Innovative Practice and the Personalized School Climate Practice is now available behind the portal. **The application will close on July 31, 2015.** Each activity can only be completed if the corresponding 2015 CCRPI pre - data collection was completed in Fall, 2014.

The application can be accessed by both principal level users and district level users by logging into the MyGaDOE portal, hovering over the CCRPI link, and clicking on CCRPI Data Collection.

In these applications, principals will provide descriptions of the innovative practice and/or personalized school climate **post - data for the 2014-2015 school year.** Principals will also upload post - data files at this time.

#### **Some helpful hints:**

- The activities are optional. Remember that each activity can only be completed if the corresponding 2015 CCRPI pre - data collection was completed in Fall, 2014.

- Principals of schools that did not complete an activity in the Fall are not required to sign off on this application.
- A user guide for these activities is attached. Please be sure to read it thoroughly, as the process is different this year.
- **Schools using SLO targets to indicate improved student achievement for Innovative Practice do not have to upload post assessment data, as the GaDOE has access to the data through Student Class and Student Record.** However, a statement should be made in the description box of the Data Collection application indicating that SLO data should be used.
- If a school is recognized by GaDOE for implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) with fidelity, it is not necessary for the school to complete the Personalized School Climate submission for PBIS in the CCRPI Data Collection application. These GaDOE recognized schools will be awarded the .5 point for the Personalized School Climate Exceeding the Bar indicator on the CCRPI.
- Questions regarding the Personalized School Climate indicator should be directed to Marilyn Watson at 404-651-7179 or via e-mail at [mawatson@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:mawatson@doe.k12.ga.us) or Jeff Hodges at 404-463-7891 or via e-mail at [jhodges@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:jhodges@doe.k12.ga.us).
- The CCRPI Data Collections window for **2015 post - data** will close on **July 31, 2015**.

For help accessing the portal and with any application functionality issues, please contact the GaDOE Information Systems Customer Support Center at 1-800-869-1011 or [dticket@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dticket@doe.k12.ga.us)

*If you have questions regarding the webinars or need assistance with navigating the CCRPI reports, **please contact the Accountability Specialist assigned to work with your district.** The list can be accessed by clicking on the following link: <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Accountability/Pages/default.aspx>.*

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## SLO Flexibility Webinar

Beginning in SY 2015-2016, the GADOE is allowing districts additional flexibility in the administration of SLOs.

The student growth requirement for TKES will consist of a **maximum** of two growth measures for teachers employed in Cohort 1 (RT3) districts and a **maximum** of one growth measure for teachers employed in all other districts. This practice will enable all teachers to have a consistent number of growth measures, not varying numbers of measures based on district-wide SLO development and scheduling requirements. Allowing districts to implement a consistent number of growth measures for all teachers will enable more efficient management of the administration of student growth measures.

This flexibility means that **all developed SLOs do not have to be administered district-wide.** Districts should use the recommendations below to make decisions which ensure teachers only administer the required number of student growth measures (two per teacher in Cohort 1/RT3 districts and one in all other districts.) Your local human resources policies and procedures should be followed as you determine the growth measures for teachers.

*Growth Measure Selection Criteria:*

- If a teacher teaches a tested course or courses, this measure or these measures take priority and must be one or both of the measures (Cohort 1/RT3) or THE measure (all other districts).  
\*Please note: If a teacher teaches the same Milestones-tested course all segments of the instructional day/year, the teacher will have only one measure regardless of the cohort of the district. Example: A high school physical science teacher teaches physical science all day long. This teacher has only one growth measure.
- The administered SLOs must include course(s) with the greatest student enrollment.

Specific guidance and examples will be provided during the **webinar scheduled Thursday, July 23 at 10:00 AM**. This invitation may be forwarded to other leaders in your district as determined by the superintendent.

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7818189947223088898>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

[View System Requirements](#)

Please contact Michele Purvis, GaDOE Evaluation System Specialist, with questions at [mpurvis@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:mpurvis@doe.k12.ga.us) or (404) 232-1537.

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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](#).

### GaDOE Data Collections Conference Georgia Department of Education

The Georgia Department of Education will host the fifth annual Data Collections Conference on August 26-28, 2015 at the Georgia Department of Education at the Classic Center in Athens, Georgia. The conference mission continues to focus on presenting attendees with a better understanding of state and federal reporting requirements, including any reporting changes for fiscal year 2016. The conference will also provide attendees with information related to the importance of internal data collections and reporting procedures.

#### Target Audience:

Any individual (SEA, district and school level administrators, and any support staff) accountable for state and federal reporting related to funding, accountability, or education program management is encouraged to attend the conference. The target audience includes any individual with responsibility for collecting, maintaining, reporting, or certifying data at any levels within the school district.

**More Information:** <http://dcconference.gadoe.org/Pages/Home.aspx>

### Georgia Education Leadership Institute Georgia Department of Education & Georgia Foundation for Public Education

The GaDOE and the Georgia Foundation for Public Education will host the Georgia Education Leadership Institute at the Marriott Marquis in downtown Atlanta from September 9-11. The conference agenda includes keynote, pre-conference and breakout speakers, as well as a Plenary Session scheduled on Thursday afternoon featuring leaders from various state and university organizations.

Follow this link to the Institute webpage to learn more, and register today: [www.ncyi.org/gaedc](http://www.ncyi.org/gaedc)

**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).

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