



# STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION OF GEORGIA

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## JUNE 2015 NEWSLETTER

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### SCSC Meetings

The last monthly State Charter Schools Commission was held on May 27, 2015. The meeting minutes are available [here](#). The next Commission meeting is a called meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 24, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. via conference call to discuss the SCSC operational budget. 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 on May 15, 2015. SCSC staff conducted a compliance review of petitions to ensure eligibility and notified schools that were not legally compliant of their deficiencies. Petition review panels comprised of SCSC staff and expert third party reviewers in the fields of finance, education, law, and policy will review remaining 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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### Training Opportunities

The [2014-2015 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 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](#).

### **TKES/LKES Credentialing Training**

**August 15, 17, 18, 19**

**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**

Send the names and email addresses of individuals who will attend the training to [lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov](mailto:lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov).

### **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 June and July:

- **Title Programs:** Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan; Flexible Learning Program plan, Self-Monitoring Checklist
- **Superintendent's Test Certification** - Spring
- **Data Collections:** Student Course Profile, CPI, Student Class-Class Size, Student Record, Special Education – Disproportionality, Special Education – Preschool Exist Data, Special Education – Postsecondary Outcomes, Special Education – Timelines, Special Education – Continuation of Services, End-of-Pathway Assessments (EOPA)

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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## Department of Early Care and Learning Presentation

In an effort to communicate ways in which state charter schools can streamline the student transition from Pre-K to Kindergarten and beyond, representatives from the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) will provide a brief presentation at the regularly scheduled SCSC meeting on July 29th.

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## Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 68 Guidance

GASB 68 requires changes in how government entities perform pension accounting. GaDOE briefly covered these changes during the 2015 GAINS presentation. The slides from this presentation can be found [here](#). Instructions on how to book the Teachers Retirement System pension liability are available on each SCSC school's TRS secured file locker on the employer desktop. As a reminder, the SCSC sent these instructional packets to the CFO of each school on June 15, 2015. Instructions, pension expense allocation worksheet, sample note disclosures, sample school system packets, and general information relating to the implementation of GASB 68 are available on the [GaDOE Financial Review website](#).

*Please contact Amy Rowell ([arowell@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:arowell@doe.k12.ga.us)) in the Financial Review division at GaDOE with questions.*

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## 2015 CCRPI Timeline

The GaDOE has provided the following 2015 CCRPI timeline. When each of the activities opens, GaDOE will send details and user guides. Note that some of the applications will be open for a short period of time, so please plan accordingly.

<b>Dates</b>	<b>CCRPI Application</b>	<b>Application Access</b>
June 24 – July 3 , 2015	2015 CCRPI Data Collection Application <b>Post Data Collection ONLY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative Practice Post-data Collection Activity</li> <li>• Personalized Climate Post-data Collection Activity</li> </ul>	School Principals District Users Superintendents
June 24 – November 13, 2015	Assessment Matching Application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available in June               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ACCESS, GAA, GHSWT</li> <li>○ ACT, SAT, AP, IB</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Available in October               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Georgia Milestones EOG and EOC</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	District Users Superintendents
August 17 – August 28, 2015	Summer Graduate Collection Application	District Users Superintendents
September 14 – September 30, 2015	Cohort Withdrawal Update Application	High School Principals District Users Superintendents
October 26 – November 13, 2015	Non-Participation Collection Application	District Users Superintendents

Note: Principals have access to the following applications:

1. CCRPI Data Collection Application
2. Cohort Withdrawal Update Application

The Accountability Team will continue to support schools and districts regarding CCRPI reports, applications, 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 direct questions toward Melissa Fincher, Ph.D., GaDOE Deputy Superintendent for Assessment & Accountability, at [mfincher@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:mfincher@doe.k12.ga.us) or (404) 651-9405.

## GaDOE CCRPI Informational Webinars

The GaDOE Accountability Division announced a series of webinars to provide information on the 2015 CCRPI (College and Career Ready Performance Index). The webinars will cover all aspects of the CCRPI, including data sources, data calculations, and scoring. Schools are encouraged to participate in all of the webinars, given each one will cover a different topic. The schedule is as follows (note some dates have passed, but sessions are recorded).

Date	Time	Topic	URL Registration Link
June 3, 2015	10:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Resources	<a href="https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8002236097669165570">https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8002236097669165570</a>
June 10, 2015	10:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Scoring	<a href="https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4089078612460953858">https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4089078612460953858</a>
June 17, 2015	10:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Achievement: Content Mastery	<a href="https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3574849118778039042">https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3574849118778039042</a>
June 24, 2015	10:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Achievement: Beyond Content Mastery	<a href="https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7384250089719613186">https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7384250089719613186</a>
July 8, 2015	10:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Progress	<a href="https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4946862608870438658">https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4946862608870438658</a>
July 15, 2015	10:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Achievement Gap	<a href="https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5760989396587423746">https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5760989396587423746</a>
July 22, 2015	10:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Graduation Rate	<a href="https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5118229192640742402">https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5118229192640742402</a>

Please note that the webinar platform requires participants to **pre-register in advance**. Pre-registration will also result in the participant receiving the recording of the session after its conclusion. To pre-register, click on the link corresponding to the session.

**Please note the following additional details:**

After pre-registering, participants will receive a unique link to use in entering the actual webinar session on its scheduled date/time.

- Participants may share the invitation link with others in your office/system that may need to attend the session.
- Users will be offered options in terms of audio availability via headphones, computer speakers, or phone. It will be important to have any microphones/phones on mute to prevent disruptive audio feedback.
- Please ensure that the following email addresses are permitted to pass through your local filters:  
[customercare@gotowebinar.com](mailto:customercare@gotowebinar.com)  
[customercare@gototraining.com](mailto:customercare@gototraining.com)  
[customercare@gotomeeting.com](mailto:customercare@gotomeeting.com)

*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.qadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Accountability/Pages/default.aspx>.*

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## 2015-16 Assessment Webinar Schedule & Fall 2015 Assessment Conference

Please note that the following items have been posted to the GaDOE website:

- **2015-2016 Assessment Webinar Schedule**
- **2015 Fall Assessment Conference Memorandum**

These two items are available under the *For Educators* link (under *Assessment Resources*) at: <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/default.aspx>.

- Enter the *For Educators* link, click on *Memoranda & Announcements*.
- These two memos are posted at the top of the list that appears on that webpage.
- Click on the *PDF* link that appears to the right of each memo's title and the document will open for viewing/printing.

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## TKES/LKES Information and Updates

Please see clarifying information regarding Superintendent Assurances and TEM and LEM determination for 2014-2015, as well as updates delivered during recent RESA Regional Feedback Sessions.

### **Superintendent Assurances**

- The deadline for signing off on the TKES/LKES Superintendent Assurances for the 2014-2015 academic year is **June 30, 2015**. **June 30** each year will be the established date for sign off for the preceding academic year. **Example: Academic Year 2015-2016 – Sign-off will be June 30, 2016.**
- The platform has been modified to allow the upload of corrective action documentation should the ability to sign-off with truth and accuracy depend upon action to correct any implementation irregularities. Example: An SLO implementation irregularity occurs resulting in action by the superintendent and/or the district human resources department. A statement of the irregularity and the action taken including the date of resolution should be uploaded in the Superintendent Assurances container in the TLE Electronic Platform.

### **2014-2015 TEM and LEM**

- Non-RT3 districts will not verify the 2013-2014 data in the 65% Verification Tool. This data will be view only and will be released this summer. This lack of verification will result in *unofficial* TEM/LEM determinations.
- Since this is the first year of state-wide implementation and growth data is lagging, not all teachers in non-RT3 districts will have growth data from 2013-2014 to be used with the 2014-2015 TAPS summative ratings to form *unofficial* 2014-2015 Teacher Effectiveness Measures (TEMs).
- In non-RT3 districts only teachers of tested grades and courses (SGP) will have TEMs determined.
- All leaders in non-RT3 districts will have LEMs determined based only on the growth data of tested grades and courses (SGP).
- This is a reminder that GaPSC is collecting only TAPS/LAPS summative ratings for the purposes of teacher/leader certification and step increases this year (2014-2015) and next school year (2015-2016).
- TEMs and LEMs are being generated for RT3 districts for the payment of the one-time merit bonuses. GaDOE will send TEM and LEM reports to RT3 superintendents this summer.
- GaDOE will also send *unofficial* TEM and LEM reports to all non-RT3 superintendents to assist districts in understanding the measures, to inform professional learning, and to inform district SLO work.

### **2015-2016 TEM and LEM**

- GaDOE has requested a one year waiver to delay the use of growth data. This means that if we get the waiver the SGP and SLO growth data from 2014-2015 will not be combined with the TAPS/LAPS ratings from 2015-2016 to

form 2015-2016 Teacher Effectiveness Measures (TEMs)/Leader Effectiveness Measures (LEMs) to be used in high stakes personnel decisions. We anticipate being granted the waiver but will not know for another few months.

- The 65% Verification Tool will be released late summer to early fall for ALL districts to verify the 2014-2015 data collected through the district Student Information System (SIS) as a part of regular state data collections – Teacher Class File, Student Class File, and Student Record. This ensures appropriate data linkages. The verification window will be 6 to 8 weeks in order to allow careful review.

### **Ensuring Strong Data Linkages**

- The orientation as well as the annual evaluator update will include specific information and emphasis on accurate roster verification.
- TLE, Data Collections, and appropriate SIS vendors will present data linkage sessions at the State Data Collections Conference annually held in Athens during August.
- Sessions will also be presented at the annual SIS conference and applicable SIS vendor conferences.

Annual TLE Electronic Platform updates including new professional learning work with GaPSC and information regarding plans to pilot modified implementation in a few schools or districts will be sent in June following communication with the respective advisory groups.

*Please contact Avis King, GaDOE Deputy Superintendent for School Improvement, with questions at [aking@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:aking@doe.k12.ga.us) or (404) 651-7277.*

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## **LEA SLO Administration Requirement**

The process for requesting an exception to the LEA SLO administration requirement will now be housed on the TLE Platform. If your charter school believes there is justification for an exception to the LEA SLO administration requirement, please provide [Michele Purvis](#) with the charter school contact information. The exception plan in the TLE Platform will then be targeted to them. The contact information should include the **name and email information** of the person who will need to complete the request. Unless the process for requesting an exception to the LEA SLO administration requirement is submitted in the TLE Platform, no exceptions will be granted and the expectation for the implementation of LEA developed SLOs will remain. **Please note the window for completing this request closes at 5:00 on Monday, June 22<sup>th</sup>.**

*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](#).*

### **Governor's Reading Mentors/A Language and Literacy Partnership Governor's Office of Student Achievement**

In 2012, Governor Deal introduced a new initiative to improve early literacy in Georgia by creating a Reading Instruction Mentor program (RMP) in the Governor's Office of Student Achievement that works to improve the percentage of children reading at grade level by the end of third grade. The state-funded Reading Mentors worked closely with two to three elementary schools within a school district to provide job-embedded reading instruction professional development and

instructional coaching to pre-kindergarten through third grade teachers. GOSA will launch a second cohort of partner schools for the 2015-2017 time-frame.

GOSA is seeking schools that have a strong commitment from building level leadership to improve reading instruction and student achievement and that could benefit from the strategic investment in reading instruction this program will provide. **Selected schools will receive a state-funded literacy instructional expert who will work closely with the school to ensure that all students are on grade level by the end of their third grade year.** Third grade is a pivotal point in elementary education at which students must be ready to transition to using reading comprehension as a tool for understanding curriculum content.

Please find the application [here](#) and direct questions to [cgood@georgia.gov](mailto:cgood@georgia.gov) or the RMP Program Manager, Renee Gottwald at [rgottwald@georgia.gov](mailto:rgottwald@georgia.gov) or (404) 904-5431. **Proposals should be submitted to GOSA by June 19, 2015.**

### **The Innovation Fund Grants Governor's Office of Student Achievement**

The Innovation Fund supports local education authorities (LEAs) in planning, implementing, and scaling innovative education programs that advance student achievement throughout Georgia. Recently, Governor Deal appropriated state funding for Fiscal Year 2016 to provide new grant opportunities. The funding priorities for these grants include the following.

- Applied Learning with a Focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Education,
- Birth to Age Eight Language and Literacy Development
- Development and Replication of Blended Learning School Models,
- Teacher and Leader Development for High-Need Schools

To read more about these grant opportunities, visit GOSA's website at <http://gosa.georgia.gov/innovation-fund-grant-opportunities-0>. **On July 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, GOSA will host technical assistance days for all agencies interested in applying for an Innovation Fund grant.** To register for a technical assistance day, please click here.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Rebecca Ellis, Innovation Fund Program Manager, or Dr. Cayanna Good, Deputy Director of Innovations and Academic Strategy, at [rellis@georgia.gov](mailto:rellis@georgia.gov) or [cgood@georgia.gov](mailto:cgood@georgia.gov).

### **2015 Charter School Program Grants Competition for Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools U.S. Department of Education**

The U.S. Department of Education's Charter Schools Program (CSP) has announced the 2015 CSP Grants Competition for Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools. This program is designed to assist non-profit charter management organizations, and other entities that are not for-profit entities, in replicating or expanding high-quality charter schools with demonstrated records of success. Applicants must have experience operating more than one high-quality charter school. Descriptions of the previous grantees from 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2014 can be found on our [website](#).

In 2015, the Department plans to use up to \$40,000,000 for this competition, and estimates making between 19 and 25 awards (the Department is not bound by any estimates).

Applications are due by **July 15, 2015, at 4:30:00 p.m. (Washington DC time)**, and must be submitted through Grants.gov. Applicants must register at Grants.gov prior to submitting an application. The registration process can take up to several weeks if all steps are not completed accurately or in a timely manner. More information is available on the CSP [website](#).



To read the Notice, please click on the following link: [FY15 84.282M Notice Inviting Applications](#).

### **Race to the Top (RT3)/Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) Summer Conference Georgia Department of Education and GAEL**

The educational initiatives funded by Georgia's Race to the Top (RT3) grant affect every school district in Georgia. The RT3 Implementation Office is again partnering with GAEL to provide important information to school district leaders throughout the state on this important work. To ensure that every district has the opportunity to hear the updates and engage in meaningful discussion about how Georgia can sustain the successful initiatives, RT3 grant funds were included in the scope of work to pay the registration fees for individuals from each district to attend the 2015 Summer GAEL Conference, July 12-July 14, 2015 at the Jekyll Island Convention Center. RT3 will pay the registration fees for up to **five members** from each school district. The recommended designees include the Superintendent, Associate/Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Personnel Director, and two other district or building level leaders. Please complete the [registration form](#) and return to Pat Myers [pmyers@gael.org](mailto:pmyers@gael.org) at the GAEL organization. You must email your form no later than April 3, 2015.

In addition to a number of outstanding professional learning sessions, GAEL will offer sessions on Teacher and Leader Keys, Changes in Assessments, Merit Pay, Technology for improving instruction, and much more. Please direct questions toward Deborah White, GACIS Executive Director at 706-250-4804 or by email at [dwhite@gael.org](mailto:dwhite@gael.org).

### **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>

### **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).