



STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION OF GEORGIA

MARCH 2015 NEWSLETTER

SCSC Meetings

The State Charter Schools Commission last met on February 25, 2015. The meeting minutes are available [here](#). The next Commission meeting is on Wednesday, March 25, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. in the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Board Room. The 2015 Commission meeting calendar is available [on the SCSC website](#).

2015 Petition Cycle

The application for the 2015 petition cycle is now available [here](#). All applicants should ensure they use the newly released version since it is different than the 2014 version. Applications are due May 15, 2015.

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 if you wish to attend a training session.

Charter Schools Financial Management Certification Program

Introductory Accounting

RESCHEDULED for April 28-30, 2015 due to inclement weather conditions in February

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 Introductory Accounting course will introduce participants to basic accounting concepts for governmental funds. Topics covered include – accounting equation, chart of accounts, double entry accounting, accounting systems and records, fund accounting, basis of accounting, payroll and benefit accounting, and case study. Visit the SCSC website to see the full [program overview](#).

Budgeting and Purchasing for Charter Schools

May 6-7, 2015

Atlanta, Georgia

Invited: School Business Managers and Administrators

This course is part of the CVIOG Financial Management Certification and will focus on roles of the board and staff in budgeting, budget preparation process, estimating revenues and expenditures, projection of ending fund balance, and justification of budget to funding authorities and board. Budget administration, long term financial planning, and the Quality Basic Education funding formula will also be discussed. The Purchasing course will focus on topics important to the purchasing process, from determining needs to receipt of purchased goods and services. Also discussed are alternative purchasing methods, required documentation, and ethics. Visit the SCSC website to see the full [program overview](#).

TKES/LKES Sustainability Training

June 15, 17, 18, 19

The GaDOE West Tower Training Room A (10th Floor)

Atlanta, Georgia

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

Every Georgia LEA is required to create a sustainability plan for the implementation of the Teacher and Leader Keys Effectiveness Systems and to attend sustainability training. The SCSC, in conjunction with the GaDOE, has developed training specifically focused on best practices for evaluation sustainability in state charter schools. It's imperative that TKES/LKES team leads attend the training for their designated area(s). More information about this training is available [here](#).

June 15 - SLO Sustainability Day 1

June 17 - SLO Sustainability Day 2

June 18 - Electronic Platform Sustainability

June 19 - Data Sustainability

Schools should send the names of the representatives who will attend each session to [Lauren Holcomb](#) and notify [Kathy Reese](#) at the GaDOE of any changes to your sustainability plan as soon as possible.

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.

Reporting Deadlines

The following reporting items are due in March and April:

- **Title I Significant Growth or Expansion**
- **TKES/LKES Survey Window Closes**
- **Data Collections:** CPI, FTE, Student Class-Class Size, Teacher Class

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.

Please direct questions about reporting items to [Terence Washington](#), SCSC Finance and Operational Accountability Manager, via email or at (404) 656-2837.

SCSC Georgia Milestones and Accountability Guidance

The SCSC has released guidance on the Georgia Milestones Assessment and how it relates to state charter accountability. The guidance is available [here](#).

Georgia Milestones Test Materials Adjustment Window

Please note the upcoming Test Materials Adjustment (TMA) windows for the Spring 2015 Georgia Milestones End of Grade (EOG) and End of Course (EOC) administrations. The TMA windows provide the opportunity to order additional test materials if needed.

TMA windows for Spring 2015:

End of Grade (EOG)

- Opens: Tuesday, March 17, 2015
- Closes: Friday, April 24, 2015

End of Course (EOC)

- Opens: Tuesday, April 7, 2015
- Closes: Thursday, June 4, 2015

The link to CTB.com for entering such requests follows: www.ctb.com/login. Users should utilize the same login information that was used for the original enrollment data collection in January 2015.

If you have general questions about the Georgia Milestones Spring 2015 administrations, please contact:

[Mary Nesbit-McBride](mailto:Mary.Nesbit-McBride@ctb.com), (404) 232-1207; (Lead Contact for EOC)

[Robert McLeod](mailto:Robert.McLeod@ctb.com), (404) 656-2589; (Lead Contact for EOG)

[Michael Huneke](mailto:Michael.Huneke@ctb.com), (404) 232-1208; (EOC/EOG Technology)

Experience Online Testing Georgia Website

A refreshed version of the **Experience Online Testing Georgia** website is now available. **The primary purpose of this website is to provide exposure to the online platform that students will utilize when taking the Georgia Milestones tests.**

Highlights of the new site include:

- The interface, while very similar to the previous site, has been updated to mirror that of the Secure Testing Application (STA) that will be utilized this spring.
- Practice test content is now grouped into three grade bands – Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, and High School for the content areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.
- Test items that more closely emulate Section 3 of the English Language Arts test have been added. With that said, please note that this site is not designed as a practice test site; rather it is intended to acquaint students with the functionality of the online test delivery system.
- In mathematics, this site will also provide the opportunity to practice with Expression and Equation Entry (EEE) items. Online test-takers in mathematics will encounter one item of this type during the spring administration. Importantly, these items are included this spring for *field test purposes only*.
- The accommodations of Screen Reader, High Contrast, and Large Font remain available and will be available for the practice tests at each grade band. Users will need to activate desired accommodations by selecting them in the section titled “Accommodations”.

The items that comprise the demonstration tests are general in nature and reflect multiple grade levels. **Please use the following link to access the site:** <http://experience-ga.ctb.com/>. No login is required. To access a test,

click on the login button to begin your experience. Additionally, the link for the previous site will be redirected to this new link.

Please direct questions toward [Melissa Fincher](#), GaDOE Deputy Superintendent for Assessment & Accountability, via email or at (404) 651-9405.

GaDOE Student Learning Objectives State Exemplars

The SLO team is requesting feedback regarding the State Exemplars. Please submit any suggestions or identified revisions using the link below by Friday, March 20, 2015. District feedback is critical to ensure appropriate vetting of the assessments. An additional level of review is also being conducted by Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL), an external education research group. The recommendations from districts and SEDL will guide the refinement of the exemplars and corrections will be completed prior to July 2015. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1FXGiz2rbE4wheSv4YUm0R7iu3B3WCKy2bWnw56OSUN8/viewform>

Please direct questions to [Michele Purvis](#), GaDOE Program Manager and Evaluation System Specialist, via email or at (404) 232-1537.

Student Learning Objectives Reporting

The SLO Spreadsheet for Special Reporting Situations should be submitted to your SLO team member via the portal by the close of business on Tuesday, March 31. Any additions, corrections or required revisions from the fall submission should be reflected on the March spreadsheet and will override submitted data from October.

Please contact [Michele Purvis](#), GaDOE Evaluation System Specialist, via email or at (404) 232-1537 or with questions.

Community Eligibility Provision Webinar Series

The U.S. Department of Agriculture will host a webinar on March 18, 1-2 pm EST to provide an overview of financial considerations related to electing the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). The panel will include a State agency representative describing the State agency role in helping school districts with financial considerations and a school district representative sharing the local perspective. USDA will also demonstrate how to use the USDA Estimator Tool to estimate Federal reimbursements under CEP.

This session will be available via Microsoft Office LiveMeeting (webinar) and is free to all participants. You do not need to pre-register. You will need access to a telephone line and a computer with internet access for this webinar. The audio for this webinar will be recorded. We encourage you to participate as a group, if possible. Telephone lines will be limited.

To participate in the webinar, log onto the following website:

<https://www.livemeeting.com/cc/usdafns/join?id=T6HS7J&role=attend&pw=P%29n6%2BZCmx>

- If prompted, type in the meeting ID: T6HS7J

- If prompted, type in the entry code: P)n6+ZCmx
- Call in to: (866) 847-7863

Participants will need to have Java installed on their computer system, as well as the Microsoft LiveMeeting 2007 Client. The client can be downloaded at:

<https://www307.livemeeting.com/cc/usdafns/join?id=NG56HR&role=attend&pw=P8.M%2Ck%2Fpj>.

Please direct questions toward [Dawn Bartolomeo](#) via email or at (703) 305-2610.

Technology Inventory Update

The 2014-2015 Annual Technology Inventory Update is available at this time. The Superintendent sign-off will need to be completed by the last Friday in May which is May 29, 2014.

All files to assist with the collection of this data can be found at: <http://www.gadoe.org/Technology-Services/Instructional-Technology/Pages/Technology-Inventory.aspx>.

Please contact [Missy Smith](#), GaDOE Supervisor of Operations for Georgia Virtual Learning, via email or at (404) 657-7651 with questions.

State Charter Collaborative Communities

The GaDOE has created a schedule of Collaborative Communities for state charter schools in the 2014-15 school year focused on special education. The information presented will assist schools in the five focus areas for implementation of IDEA: the Identification Process, Services and Supports, Student Progress, Parent Engagement, and College and Career Readiness. **Two attendees** may participate from each school. Register at www.mresa.org or contact [Raylicia Davis](#) with questions.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	PARKING
5/6/15	10:00 - 2:00	Chick-Fil-A	5200 Buffington Road Atlanta, Georgia No Parking Fee

Chick-fil-A will provide a complimentary continental breakfast and lunch.

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](#).

Surplus Sale Brighten Academy

Brighten Academy will have a surplus sale of items no longer needed on Saturday, March 28th from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. at the Brookmont campus, located at 3264 Brookmont Parkway in Douglasville, Georgia. Please

note cash payments only will be accepted and buyers must take items the day of purchase. No refunds or holds. All sales are final.

Non-profit organizations may attend a preview sale on Friday, March 27th from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Please contact [Connie Arnold](#) via email or at (770) 615-3680 for more details and requirements.

Board Bank Training – Atlanta Georgia Charter Schools Association

As the charter school community grows, so does the need for founding board members with the critical skills required to steer charters schools from mission development, through petition submission, to becoming operational. GCSA is pleased to offer a free training on Saturday, April 25, 2015, 9:00 am to noon. The location will be announced soon. The training is for individuals who have a heart for education and a desire to serve the charter school community. If you have expertise in education, business, law, human resources, marketing, fundraising, or other specialized fields — or if you have strong community and business ties in a particular community, your service can be invaluable to current or future charter public schools.

The free training will introduce the skills and parameters of charter school board service and can match attendees with schools who would benefit from their skill set. Contact Elisa Falco, [404-837-2973](tel:404-837-2973) or efalco@gacharters.org to learn more and please complete this [short survey](#) below if you are interested in enrolling.

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. 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 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.

GaDOE Data Collections Conference Georgia Department of Education

Conference Description:

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.

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