



# STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION OF GEORGIA

## MARCH 2016 NEWSLETTER

*The SCSC is on Twitter! Make sure you are following us [@SCSCGa](https://twitter.com/SCSCGa)! We share pertinent news, information on trainings, highlights from our schools and other things that you may want to know!*

---

### SCSC Meetings

The last monthly State Charter Schools Commission was held on February 24, 2016. The February meeting minutes are available [here](#). The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 30, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Board Room. The 2016 Commission meeting calendar is available [on the SCSC website](#).

---

### 2016 Petition Cycle

The application for the 2016 petition cycle was released on February 24<sup>th</sup>. Completed petitions must be received by the SCSC no later than 4:00 p.m. on May 16, 2016. Find more information, including the petition application, [here](#).

---

### First Lady Visits International Charter School of Atlanta



First Lady Sandra Deal visited International Charter School of Atlanta to commemorate “International Day” on March 8. As part of her visit and to promote her literacy initiative “Read Across Georgia,” Mrs. Deal read a story to first-grade students and brought copies of the book *Exploring Georgia’s Wildlife* to third-grade students. The First Lady launched her

“Read Across Georgia” initiative in support of Governor Nathan Deal’s goal of increasing the percentage of children reading at grade level by the completion of third grade. Through this program, Mrs. Deal has visited and read to all 159 counties and 181 school districts in Georgia to encourage student reading.

---

## **Training Opportunities**

The [2015-2016 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.

## **Petitioner Webinar Series**

**March 9, 2016 at 2 p.m. - Overview of the 2016 Petition Application - [View Recording/View Presentation](#)**

**March 23, 2016 at 2 p.m. - Funding and Budget Template Review - [REGISTER](#)**

**April 7, 2016 at 2 p.m. - Creating Sound Financial Policies - [REGISTER](#)**

The Petitioner Webinar series is designed to prepared potential petitioners for the 2016 charter petition process. Participants will learn about the 2016 petition application, the state charter funding formula and petition budget template, and creating sound financial policies. Final dates and access information will be shared following the approval of the 2016 Petition Application by the SCSC.

## **Charter School Financial Management Certification: Writing Financial Policies**

**May 3, 2016**

**Administrative Office of the Courts, 244 Washington Street, 3rd Floor, Atlanta, Georgia**

The Carl Vinson Institute of Government Charter Schools Financial Management Certification is a six-course series that equips participants with the unique skills and knowledge needed to financially operate a charter school. The Writing Financial Policies course will cover development of sound financial policies important to charter schools, including Accounting and Financial Reporting, Budget, Revenue, Expenditures, Fund Balance, Capital Asset, Cash and Investments, and Purchasing. Find more information, including the full course calendar, [here](#).

## **Governance Training**

**Deadline - June 30, 2016**

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. For FY16, state charter school governing board members had the opportunity to participate in SCSC-provided training at no cost, or to seek alternate training using their own funds. As the opportunity to participate in SCSC provided governance training has now expired, state charter board members must fulfill the obligation through the following method.

- 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.

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 Programs:** Title I Significant Growth or Expansion
- **Data Collections:** CPI; FTE; Student Class- Class Size; Teacher Record

The [FY16 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.

---

## **GaDOE School Climate Surveys**

The Georgia Department of Education has extended the deadline to submit Student, Parent, and School Personnel Surveys in the calculation of the School Climate Star Rating to Friday, April 1, 2016. The Student and Personnel Surveys must be completed at a minimum participation rate of 75% to receive a score on the School Climate Star Rating. The Parent Survey must be completed by a minimum of 15 parents to receive a score on the School Climate Star Rating.

Schools may check their participation rates [here](#) using the 3-digit school system ID number.

Please contact Marilyn Watson and/or Jeff Hodges with questions, at [mawatson@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:mawatson@doe.k12.ga.us) or (404) 651-7179 and [jhodges@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:jhodges@doe.k12.ga.us) or (404) 463-7891, respectively.

---

## **Participating in the Tobacco-Free School Initiative**

The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) is seeking the input of state charter schools in the support of the Tobacco-Free School initiative. DPH would like to work with all state charter schools to adopt a 100% Tobacco Free Schools policy and eliminate tobacco from Georgia's elementary and secondary school campuses.

Model policies are available to the governing boards of charters schools that have not yet adopted such a policy. DPH also has created assessment tools to ensure alignment between school policies and the state's initiative.

For questions or support, please contact Anne-Marie L. Coleman at DPH ([Anne-Marie.Coleman@dph.ga.gov](mailto:Anne-Marie.Coleman@dph.ga.gov)).

---

## 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](#).

### **Shark Tank: The Innovation Fund Challenge** **The Governor's Office of Student Achievement**

The Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) is hosting Shark Tank: The Innovation Fund Challenge – a new and exciting Innovation Fund grant opportunity for teachers. Shark Tank: The Innovation Fund Challenge provides an opportunity for any eligible public school K-12 teacher in Georgia, as well as current and former Innovation Fund grantees and Innovation in Teaching Competition winners, to receive a tiny grant of up to \$10,000 to pilot a small-scale teacher or leader development project.

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016 at the Innovation Fund Summit in Atlanta, GA, up to four selected participants will have five to ten minutes each to pitch their ideas to a panel of education sharks (including GOSA staff and other education experts), who will ask questions about each pitch. Once each presenter has pitched his/her idea, GOSA will award one to four tiny grant(s) to the winning pitch or pitches at the event.

Other strong applications, although not selected to participate in the live Shark Tank competition event, will be invited to submit a video presentation in the Shark Tank-like format following the competition. Additional grant awards will be available based on the results of the review and scoring of those submissions. Full details of this follow-up grant opportunity will be published following the June 2<sup>nd</sup> event.

To learn more about this opportunity and how teachers can apply to participate, please visit the Governor's Office of Student Achievement's website or click here to view the Shark Tank Guidelines. Please note that applications to participate in this year's Shark Tank are due no later than March 25th, 2016.

Please direct questions to Rebecca Ellis, Program Manager for the Innovation Fund, at [rellis@georgia.gov](mailto:rellis@georgia.gov) or 404.596.3651.

### **AntiBullying Summit** **Auburn University**

Auburn University will host its sixth national AntiBullying Summit in Peachtree City, Georgia, on June 23-24. Bullying affects academic performance, school safety, student mental health (suicide, self harm, drug abuse), and school drop out rates/absenteeism.

The Summit has received endorsement from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and has been approved for CEU and PLU credit. Approximately one-fourth of today's students report that they have been the victims of bullying, with the highest rate in the middle school grades. The issue, particularly cyberbullying, is of great concern to all schools and communities.

Keynote speakers will include Dr. Sameer Hinduja, co-director of the Cyberbullying Research Center; and Trish Prabhu, a teen-ager who developed ReThink, bullying intervention software. Other speakers include the Honorable Steven Teske, who serves on the judicial advisory council of the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice, Marilyn Watson from the Georgia Department of Education who will speak on School Climate Star Rating, and Darrell Green, NFL Hall of Famer who has established a national Strong Youth, Strong Community Foundation that works with at-risk youth.

The registration form is available [here](#). Please contact Linda Dean, Auburn University College of Education Special Projects Coordinator at [lhd0001@auburn.edu](mailto:lhd0001@auburn.edu) or 334-844-4488 with questions.

**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).

**Get Georgia Reading Campaign**

This campaign is geared toward getting all of Georgia's children on a path to third grade reading proficiency by 2020. The campaign unites public and private partners to pursue language, literacy, development, and sustainability to reach this goal. Get involved or read more about the initiative [here](#).

##