



STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION OF GEORGIA

OCTOBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

SCSC Meetings

The last monthly State Charter Schools Commission was held on September 30, 2015. The meeting minutes are available [here](#). The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 28, 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](#).

New State Charter School Openings

Congratulations to Foothills Education Charter High School on their school opening this fall!



Governor Nathan Deal helps cut the ribbon at the Foothills Education Charter High School opening.

As the new academic year begins, all state charter schools should send updated contact information for board chairs, school leaders, and administrative personnel to Katie.manthey@scsc.georgia.gov.

SCSC Performance Framework

The SCSC adopted a **comprehensive performance framework** to serve as the **primary accountability tool** for assessing **academic, financial, and operational performance of state charter schools** at its September meeting. The performance framework was the chief recommendation of a National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) evaluation of SCSC policies and practices, undertaken to assist the SCSC in continually improving and refining its authorizing practices. The goal of the performance framework is to increase transparency and objectivity by clarifying SCSC accountability expectations and by providing schools with an annual assessment of where they stand in terms of charter renewal. Specifically, the performance framework clearly defines and establishes the SCSC's expectations for:

- **Academic Performance** on both achievement and growth,
- **Financial Performance** in terms of near-term viability and long-term sustainability, and
- **Organizational Performance** in critical areas such as governance and legal compliance.

Existing state charter school with a valid charter contract will have the **option** to choose the performance framework as its accountability measure for the current charter term **or** to continue to be held to its current contractual performance goals. The framework may be an attractive option for many schools since it incorporates a wider variety of measures (including a greater emphasis on growth and value-added impact on student achievement) than current SCSC charter contracts. If a school is renewed at the end of this charter term, the Comprehensive Performance Framework will be incorporated into all future charter contracts as the accountability metric for academic, financial, and operational performance.

SCSC staff previously provided each state charter school with its performance data as measured by the Comprehensive Performance Framework for the 2013-2014 school year. Staff will also provide performance data as measured by the Framework for the 2014-2015 school year as soon as complete academic data for that year becomes available, expected in early spring 2016. **Once the SCSC staff is able to provide a school with its performance data for both the 2013-2014 and 2015-2015 school years, a school will have 60 days to submit a request to amend its charter contract to utilize the Comprehensive Performance Framework as its measure of accountability.** If a school does not submit a request to be measured by the Framework, the school will be held accountable to its current contractual performance goals when the SCSC considers the renewal of the school's charter. Staff will communicate additional details regarding that choice when a school's additional data becomes available.

The performance framework is posted on the [Comprehensive Performance Framework page](#) of the SCSC website.

Reminder - SCSC Survey of Development Needs

The SCSC invites all state charter school administrators and governing board members to participate in a survey assessing school needs. The SCSC will use the results of the survey to inform trainings and development opportunities available to state charter schools in the 2015-16 academic year. Please access the survey [here](#).

Please contact Lauren Holcomb at lauren.holcomb@scsc.georgia.gov with questions.

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 if you wish to attend a training session.

Governance Training

**Invited: Board Members and Administrators of Operational State Charter Schools
November 4-5 and February 10-11**

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 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 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

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

Charter Schools Financial Management Certification

Payroll and Purchasing Courses

**Invited: School Business Managers, Leaders, and Board Members
November 10 and 12**

The Carl Vinson Institute of Government Charter Schools Financial Management Certification is a six course program that equips participants with the unique skills and knowledge needed to financially operate a charter school. The Payroll course will focus on the Fair Labor Standards Act, new employee documentation, compensation calculation through the W-2 process, benefits including insurance and pensions, payroll taxes and remittances, payroll deductions, reporting and recording payroll, internal controls related to payroll, and payroll resources. 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. Find more information on the program [here](#).

New School Orientation

December 2, 2015

Invited: Newly Approved School Teams, Newly Hired School Leaders, New Board Chairs
Empire Room, Twin Towers, 205 Jesse Hill, Jr. Drive, Atlanta, Georgia

This training is specifically developed to assist newly approved state charter school teams with the tools and resources needed for a successful planning year and school opening. SCSC staff and other presenters will review the SCSC Pre-Opening Checklist and share critical information on human resources, facilities, Title programs, special education requirements, the Teacher and Leader Keys Effectiveness Systems (TKES/LKES), and student recruitment and marketing strategies, among other topics. Newly hired state charter leaders and newly elected governing board chairs are also invited to attend.

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 October and November:

- **Governance:** Charter School Annual Report
- **Finance:** Charter School Audit Report
- **Title Programs:** Neglected and Delinquent Annual Report; Beginning of Federal Fiscal Year – Associated Title Budgets Due; Title II, Part A Completion Reports
- **Other:** SLO Submission Window Reopens for Target Adjustments Based on Pre-Assessment Data; SLO Statements Visible in the Platform; Second Semester SLO Submission Opens for Semester-long Courses
- **Data Collections:** CPI; FTE; Student Class – Class Size; Free & Reduced Meal; Private School; Student Record – Data Cleanse; Special Education – Transition Planning;

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.

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

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](#).

Special Populations Summit **Georgia Charter Schools Association**

The GCSA Special Populations Summit is geared towards supporting teachers in best practices to meet students' needs academically and ensuring compliance in a highly regulated environment.

Both regular education and special education teachers are encouraged to attend. This year The Main Street Academy will be hosting us as we better understand our special populations.

Please contact Jhanelle Adams, Interim Director of Member Services at jadams@gacharters.org or by phone at the number [4048358915](tel:4048358915) with questions.

Please register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/special-populations-summit-tickets-18977168221>

Teacher and Leader Keys Effectiveness Systems Training for State Charter Schools Georgia Department of Education

The GaDOE Division of Teacher and Leader Effectiveness has a new training to offer state charter administrators who have been implementing the Teacher Keys Evaluation Instrument for at least one year. One participant from each Charter is invited to register on both the Electronic Platform (directions attached) and with Middle Georgia RESA. The Middle GA RESA registration site is www.ciclt.net/sn/resa/recl_application.aspx?ClientCode=mgresa&CL_ID=103102

December 8, 9, 10, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. daily
Elam Alexander Academy Media Center, 2051 Second Street, Macon, GA 31201

The purpose is to provide additional support around inter-rater reliability. Therefore, we are offering a three-day training entitled, *Evaluation Instrument on Inter-Rater Reliability*, to assist evaluators with their observation skills and accuracy. There will be particular emphasis on an evaluator's objective collection of evidence during the observation of teacher classroom performance. At the conclusion of the three day training, each participant will view a video and rate a teacher's performance using our Georgia TAPS and the associated performance appraisal rubrics. Each participant's scores will be analyzed to determine degrees of rater-reliability, and the participant will receive a subsequent score report.

As a follow up, please note that after the training, these reports should be saved as a PDF and uploaded in each participating evaluator's LKES plan. Trainers will ensure these documents are uploaded into the TLE Electronic Platform on site at the training. Charter School Evaluators of Administrators (LKES) who attend should consider this information as an additional source of documentation to inform professional development, as well as evidence in the LKES evaluation that the participant has engaged in additional training to improve evaluation skills. Additional professional development and training will be offered in the event a participant's scores determine that follow-up is needed.

Please call or e-mail Kathy Reese with the GaDOE, 478-361-9708 or kreese@doe.k12.ga.us, to register.

13th Annual Georgia Charter Schools Conference Georgia Charter Schools Association

The Georgia Charter Schools Conference is the only statewide gathering of the entire Georgia charter schools community. The 13th annual conference will be held at the Atlanta Marriott Century Center from February 3-5, 2016. GCSA welcomes charter school leaders, governing board members, authorizers, business partners, petitioners, teachers, and business managers to gather and learn about new programs, products, and techniques as well as share best practices and network.

GCSA is currently accepting Presentation Proposals. In addition to useful breakout sessions and inspiring keynote addresses, GCSA will celebrate a Charter School Teacher and Leader of the Year. More information is available [here](#).

**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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