

# STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION

## MEETING MINUTES

February 23, 2022, 10:00 a.m.

SCSC Board Room, 512 Twin Towers West

**Virtual Access:** <https://meet.goto.com/422187573>

**Phone:** +1 (408) 650-3121 **Access Code:** 422-187-573



**Attendees:** Commissioners: Buzz Brockway – Chairman; Tony Lowden – Vice-Chairman; Fitz Johnson; Lina Millan; and Mike Dudgeon. SCSC Staff: Lauren Holcomb – Executive Director; Morgan Felts – Chief Operations Officer; Cerrone Lockett – General Counsel; Katie Manthey – Director of Research & Evaluation; Kristen Settlemire – Associate General Counsel; Erin Wright – Associate General Counsel; Scott Riley – Research Analyst; Candice Ball – Business Manager; Kiara Thompson – Legal Programs Coordinator; Jacari Gill – SCSC Intern; Daniel Glenn – SCSC Intern; and Noah Hawkins – SCSC Intern.

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### I. Call to Order (Chairman Brockway)

- Chairman Brockway called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.
- The following Commissioners attended the meeting: Commissioners Brockway, Lowden, Millan, Johnson, and Dudgeon. A quorum was formed.

### II. Approval of SCSC Meeting Minutes (Chairman Brockway)

- Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the January 2022 meeting minutes. Commissioner Dudgeon seconded the motion. The January 2022 meeting minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.
- Commissioner Lowden was not present for this vote.

### III. Commissioner School Visits (SCSC Executive Director)

- Commissioner Lowden visited Northwest Classical Academy in North Cobb on February 17, 2022.
- The following schools will be visited in March: Academy for Classical Education on March 1, 2022; Spring Creek Charter Academy on March 10, 2022; and Liberty Tech Charter Academy on March 16, 2022.

### IV. Legislative Update (SCSC Executive Director)

- The Executive Director provided an update on the Governor's budget recommendations for the amended FY22 budget and the FY23 budget as impacting state charter schools. House Bill 1215 and Senate Bills 449 and 514 were also discussed.

### V. Organizational Development (SCSC Executive Director)

- Past Trainings
  - New Schools Orientation and the second round of in-person Governance Training were held recently.
- Upcoming Trainings
  - New School Orientation Session #2 will be held on March 7, 2022 in the SCSC Board Room.

- Governance Training Virtual Session #3 will take place on March 23, 2022.
- Governance Training In-Person Session #3 will be held on April 13, 2022 at the Loudermilk Center in Atlanta.

**VI. Pre-Opening Schools (SCSC Executive Director)**

- There are currently eight new schools and one replication school in our pre-opening pipeline. A few schools have continued to work through their facility search processes. After having conversations with one of those schools, Savannah Exploratory Charter Academy has officially decided to defer their opening until Fall 2023. The agency will continue to support the school as they plan for an opening next fall.

**VII. Petitions (SCSC General Counsel and SCSC Legal Programs Coordinator)**

- The FY23 Start-Up Petitions Portal opened on November 1, 2021. Currently, 25 people have accessed the petition application. We are expecting to receive between 12-16 petitions for this cycle. The deadline for petition submission is April 15, 2022, and interviews for eligible petitions begin on June 20, 2022.
- The Charter Development Manager will be handling early feedback for this petitions cycle, which will take place during the week of March 14. Eight potential petitioners have signed up.

**VIII. Accountability**

- Monitoring Update (**SCSC Associate General Counsel**)
  - Onsite monitoring concluded in November 2021. Monitoring letters were disseminated to schools on January 31, 2022. We are currently holding office hours through March 7, 2022 to provide schools with individualized assistance in understanding monitoring results and preparing for Corrective Action Plan submissions. 20 schools have signed up for monitoring office hours. The CAP portal will open on March 1, 2022, and CAP submissions are due on April 25, 2022.
- Audit Update (**SCSC Chief Operations Officer**)
  - Coweta Charter Academy and Cherokee Charter Academy have not yet submitted audits. Although the early delay was the result of school-based system changes, the current delay is due to delayed guidance as it relates to the treatment of federal funds. The auditors are currently awaiting final word from GaDOE and should be able to finalize the audits upon receipt of that information.
  - The SCSC will be releasing the annual RFP for the approved auditor program on February 25, 2022.
- CPF Briefing – March Meeting (**SCSC Director of Research & Evaluation**)
  - 2020-21 Comprehensive Performance Framework (CPF) results of all state charter schools will be shared at the March meeting. Academic, financial, and operational scores will be included in the CPF results. All schools will receive their CPF score and will be provided an opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions before the results are publicized.

**IX. Action Items**

- **Brookhaven Innovation Academy**
  - The Director of Research and Evaluation recommended that Commissioners approve Brookhaven Innovation Academy’s renewal petition by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a five-year charter contract for the operation of a state charter school.
  - The School Leader and Board Chair provided comment in support of the SCSC’s recommendation.
  - Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the proposed charter contract, as stated. Commissioner Dudgeon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Georgia Connections Academy**
  - The Director of Research and Evaluation recommended that Commissioners approve Georgia Connections Academy’s renewal petition by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a five-year charter contract for the operation of a state charter school and to serve an expanded grade range of K-12.
  - The School Leader provided comment in support of the SCSC’s recommendation.
  - Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the proposed charter contract, as stated. Commissioner Dudgeon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Statesboro STEAM Academy**
  - The Director of Research and Evaluation recommended that Commissioners approve Statesboro STEAM Academy’s renewal petition by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a five-year charter contract for the operation of a state charter school and to serve an expanded grade range of K-12.
  - The School Leader provided comment in support of the SCSC’s recommendation.
  - Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the proposed charter contract, as stated. Commissioner Dudgeon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Ivy Preparatory Academy at Kirkwood**
  - The Director of Research and Evaluation recommended that Commissioners approve Ivy Preparatory Academy at Kirkwood’s renewal petition by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a three-year charter contract for the operation of a state charter school. The charter contract will be automatically extended for two years upon written consent of the SCSC Executive Director when certain requirements are met.
  - The School Leader provided comment in support of the SCSC’s recommendation.
  - Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the proposed charter contract, as stated. Commissioner Dudgeon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School**
  - The Director of Research and Evaluation recommended that Commissioners approve Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School’s renewal petition by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute an abbreviated three-year charter contract for the operation of a state charter school and to serve an expanded grade range of K-12.

- The School Leader provided comment in support of the SCSC's recommendation.
- Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the proposed charter contract, as stated. Commissioner Dudgeon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Cirrus Charter Academy**
  - The Director of Research and Evaluation recommended that Commissioners approve Cirrus Charter Academy's renewal petition by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a two-year charter contract for the operation of a state charter school. The charter contract will include stipulations for the operations and academics of the school.
  - The School Founder proposed a three-year charter contract and a grade expansion to serve 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in lieu of the SCSC's recommendation. The School Leader and Board Chair also provided comment.
  - Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the proposed charter contract, as stated. Commissioner Dudgeon seconded the motion. Commissioner Lowden abstained from voting. The motion passed unanimously.

**X. Additional Items from Commissioners**

- Commissioner Johnson thanked all schools in attendance for their hard work.

**XI. Public Comments**

- There was no public comment.

**XII. Adjourn**

- The meeting was adjourned at 10:56 a.m.