

# STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION

## MEETING MINUTES

March 25, 2020, 10:00 a.m.

Teleconference Meeting



**Attendees:** Commissioners Tom Lewis, Paul Williams, Carmen Dill, Jose Perez, Buzz Brockway, Hunter Hill, and Dr. Lina Millan. SCSC Staff members Lauren Holcomb – Executive Director; Morgan Felts – Chief Operations Officer; Cerrone Lockett – General Counsel; Kristen Easterbrook – Charter Development Manager; Katie Manthey – Director of Research and Evaluation; Rennie Laryea – Associate General Counsel; Sarah Beck – Associate General Counsel and Operational Accountability Manager; Terence Washington – Financial Accountability Manager; Darcy Callaway – Business Manager; Danielle Williams – Communications and Outreach Coordinator; and Lindsey Newton – Graduate Student Intern. Approximately 15 members of the public were also present.

### I. Call to Order

- **Welcome-** Chairman Tom Lewis called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.
- **Public Health Emergency-** Chairman Lewis explained that due to the current COVID-19 concerns, the SCSC is holding a virtual meeting.
- **Public Comment-** Public comment procedures were announced.
- **Committee Meeting-** Chairman Lewis announced that the District-Collaborative committee meeting following the SCSC meeting is canceled.
- **Roll Call-** All commissioners were present.

### II. Approval of SCSC Meeting Minutes

- **February 26, 2020 – Scheduled Meeting** - Chairman Lewis called for an approval of the February 26, 2020 meeting minutes. Commissioner Perez motioned. Commissioner Millan seconded. The February 26, 2020 minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

### III. Commissioner School Visits

- The SCSC Executive Director announced that due to Governor Kemp’s executive order requiring all public K-12 schools to close from March 18<sup>th</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>, all commissioner school visits are suspended. She stated that the SCSC and State Charter Schools Foundation have been in close contact with schools to identify their individual needs and would respond to those needs effectively.

### IV. Legislative Update

- The SCSC Executive Director stated that the legislative session is suspended due to the COVID-19 concerns and gave an update on the Amended FY20 budget, the current status of the FY21 budget, and SCSC agency legislation. Chairman Lewis stated that the FY21 budget will likely be adjusted from its current form due to declining revenues. Chairman Lewis encouraged regular communication between SCSC staff, commissioners, and schools as things become clearer.

### V. Organizational Development Update

- **Past Trainings** – The SCSC Charter Development Manager provided an update on the New Schools Orientation held on March 17th. The training was held virtually due to COVID-19 concerns.
- **Upcoming Trainings** -The SCSC Charter Development Manager explained that no trainings are scheduled for April or May and the SCSC staff is preparing the FY21 training calendar.

VI. **School Opening and Closing Updates**

- **School Openings** - The SCSC Charter Development Manager provided an update on schools meeting pre-opening checklist milestones.
- **Petition Updates**- The SCSC Charter Development Manager stated that the SCSC staff will complete the final mock interview session for Early Feedback applicants tomorrow. Eleven petitioners are participating. She noted that the SCSC extended the deadline for start-up charter school petition applications from April 10<sup>th</sup> to April 17<sup>th</sup>.

VII. **School Accountability Update**

- **2019-2020 Accountability Update** – The SCSC Director of Research and Evaluation provided a 2019-2020 Accountability Update. Due to COVID-19-related school closures, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) has suspended the Georgia Milestones assessment testing window. She stated GaDOE is seeking a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education related to assessment requirements. She stated the SCSC will communicate with schools about the impact of the waiver on the Comprehensive Performance Framework (CPF) and renewal standards.

The SCSC Executive Director noted that the SCSC will not have academic performance data for this year due to the waiver. The SCSC staff is reviewing options for adapting the CPF moving forward.

**CPF Briefing – March Meeting** - The SCSC Director of Research and Evaluation presented the Comprehensive Performance Framework results for state charter schools for the 2018-2019 school year. She shared results and scores on both the previous version of the CPF and the newly adopted CPF as well as academic results for the school-level comparisons.

VIII. **Agency Financial Update**

- **FY20 Administrative Withhold Return** - The SCSC Financial Accountability Manager explained the SCSC FY20 administrative withhold return recommendations to commissioners. He stated that the SCSC has voluntarily returned unused agency funds to schools and that the SCSC is recommending the commissioners grant back all unused FY20 agency funds to state charter schools.

**FY21 Administrative Withhold Percentage** - The SCSC Financial Accountability Manager explained that the SCSC is legally allowed to withhold up to 3% of state charter school funds for agency operations. He stated the SCSC has always voluntarily reduced that amount. He stated that in the second action item, SCSC staff will recommend that commissioners vote to reduce the administrative to 2% for operational schools and 1% for state charters in the first year of operations.

IX. **Action Items**

- **FY20 Administrative Withhold Return**

**Recommendation:** The SCSC Financial Accountability Manager recommended that the SCSC direct the Georgia Department of Education to return the unexpended portion of the SCSC's FY20 2% (1% for first-year schools)

**SCSC Action:** Chairman Lewis called for an approval of the SCSC staff recommendation. Commissioner Perez motioned for approval. Commissioner Hill seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

- **FY 21 Administrative Withhold Percentage**

**Recommendation:** The SCSC Financial Accountability Manager recommended that the SCSC direct the Georgia Department of Education to withhold 2% of state funding allocated to state charter schools as authorized by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2089 (b) for the administrative expenses of the

SCSC except that the withhold for state charter schools in the first year of operation shall only be 1% of allocated state funding.

**SCSC Action:** Chairman Lewis called for an approval of the SCSC staff recommendation. Commissioner Williams motioned. Commissioner Perez seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

X. **Public Comment** - There was no public comment.

XI. **Adjourn** – Chairman Lewis called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commission Perez offered a motion and Commissioner Brockway seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.