

STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

September 30, 2020, 10:00 a.m.



SCSC Board Room, West Twin Tower, 5th Floor, Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Virtual Access: (<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/399925517>)

Attendees: Commissioners: Paul Williams -Chairman; Buzz Brockway -Vice Chairman; Carmen Dill; Jose Perez; Tom Lewis; 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; Darcy Callaway – Business Manager; Danielle Williams – Communications and Outreach Coordinator; Approximately 25 members of the public attended remotely.

- I. **Call to Order** (Chairman Paul Williams)
 - The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m.
 - All commissioners were present.
 - The SCSC Executive Director recognized the Academy for Classical Education for its designation as a 2020 Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. Ed); provided dates for the NACSA Virtual Conference and the Excel in Ed Virtual Conference; issued a reminder about the 2020 Census; and, announced the departure of the SCSC's Associate General Counsel for a new role.

- II. **Approval of SCSC Meeting Minutes** (Chairman Paul Williams)
 - Chairman Williams called for a motion to approve the August 26, 2020 meeting minutes. Commissioner Perez motioned. Commissioner Milan seconded. The August 26, 2020 meeting minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

- III. **School Re-Start Update** (Executive Director)
 - State charter schools are updating the SCSC on revisions to their pandemic plans as conditions change. Approximately half of state charter schools are offering in-person instruction or an in-person option. The other half are only offering virtual instruction.
 - Georgia received approval from the U.S. Ed. to repurpose the existing Charter School Program Grant to provide COVID-19 relief for schools. The grant is \$12M in funding. The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) is finalizing application details with the U.S. Ed. The SCSC will inform schools when the grant application opens.
 - The 2019 – 2020 State Facilities Grant will be distributed to all eligible charter schools equally in the amount of approximately \$39,000 per eligible school. GaDOE will request approval of these grant allocations at the October 1, 2020 State Board of Education (SBOE) meeting. GaDOE will send award letters and instructions to each grantee.

- IV. **Organizational Development** (Charter Development Manager)
 - Petitioner Bootcamp will occur virtually on October 7, 2020. Governance Training Opportunities for 2020-21 will occur virtually on November 10, February 2, and April 13.

- V. **Accountability Update** (Director of Research and Evaluation)

- **Federal Assessment and Accountability Waiver.** Georgia submitted a federal assessment and accountability waiver to the U.S. Ed. for consideration. The waiver would eliminate Georgia Milestones testing and related accountability results, specifically the CCRPI, for the current school year. GaDOE received a letter from Secretary Betsy DeVos stating that the U.S. Ed. does not plan to grant federal testing waivers for the 2020-21 school year.
- **Senate Bill 367 (SB 367).** Governor Brian Kemp signed SB 367 into law. The bill eliminates the grade 5 social studies End of Grades (EOG) Milestones assessment and eliminates four high school End of Course (EOC) tests. The SBOE determined the American Literature, Algebra or Coordinate Algebra, Biology and U.S. History EOCs will remain. Tests in 9th Grade Literature, Geometry, Physical Science and Economics will no longer be administered. SB 367 also requires that school districts administer the EOG within the last 25 days of their local school calendar.
- **Performance Review Report.** Performance reviews allow commissioners to question schools that failed to meet the CPF in one or more areas about their plans for improvement. The SCSC usually conducts school performance reviews in the spring following the release of CPF results. Due to COVID-19 and resulting school closures in Spring 2020, SCSC staff extended the performance review questionnaire deadline to June 30th and waived the in-person presentation obligations. The Director of Research and Evaluation identified participating schools and summarized the performance review results. SCSC staff will return to the standard review process in 2021.

VI. Action Items

- **DuBois Integrity Academy** (Director of Research and Evaluation)
Recommendation: The SCSC staff recommended that the SCSC approve DuBois Integrity Academy's request to amend its charter contract to add sixth, seventh and eighth grades and to increase the student enrollment limit by 570 students to 1870 students at full enrollment.

Public Comment: Craig Cason, DuBois Executive Director and Dr. Stephanie Payne, DuBois Principal, shared information about the school and why the expansion was needed.

SCSC Action: Chairman Williams called for a motion to approve the SCSC staff recommendation. Commissioner Lewis motioned. Commissioner Hill seconded. The SCSC approved the SCSC staff's recommendation for DuBois Integrity Academy to add grades 6-8 and to increase the school's enrollment limit to 1870 by unanimous vote.

- **Start-Up Charter School Petition Application for 2021** (General Counsel)

Recommendation: SCSC staff recommended for the approval of the 2021 start-up petition application. The revisions include updates to applicable submission deadlines, reflect newly enacted SCSC rules, and contain additional clarity regarding deficiencies that result in the rejection of an application, consistent with SCSC Rule 691-2-.02.

SCSC Action: Chairman Williams called for a motion to approve the SCSC staff's recommendation. Commissioner Milan motioned. Commissioner Brockway seconded. The SCSC approved the 2021 Start-Up Charter School Petition Application by unanimous vote.

VII. Additional Items from Commissioners

- There were no additional items from commissioners.

VIII. Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

IX. **Adjourn**

- The meeting adjourned at 11:19 a.m.