

STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS COMMISSION MEETING

August 27, 2014, 10 a.m.

**Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning Conference Room
East Twin Tower, Room 854, Atlanta, Georgia 30334**

Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair Charles B. Knapp. Chairman Knapp verified that a quorum existed and that all members of the commission were present.
2. Also present were Commission staff members Bonnie Holliday—Executive Director, Gregg Stevens—General Counsel and Petitions Manager, Daniela Belton—Business and Operations Manager, Terence Washington—Accountability Manager.
3. Approximately 100 members of the public also attended the meeting including charter school staff and representatives and charter school business representatives. Representatives from GCSA were also present.
4. A motion was made by Commissioner Perez and seconded by Commissioner Lowden to approve the meeting minutes from the July 30th SCSC meeting as well as the July 30th and 31st petitioner interview panels. The minutes were unanimously approved.
5. Executive Director Holliday then presented the findings from the SCSC's Authorizer Evaluation Report that was compiled by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA). She explained that the staff will use the report findings as a basis for policy development efforts in the coming year. Director Holliday also stated that the staff is heeding NACSA's advice and prioritizing the development of a comprehensive performance framework by which school progress can be documented and measured.
6. Next, Director Holliday reminded commissioners that the SCSC Governance and Policy Retreat will take place on September 4-5, 2014 at Brasstown Valley Resort. She also noted that policy discussions during the retreat will be guided by the overarching question: "What will be the long-term impact of the SCSC on the education landscape in Georgia?"
7. Next, Lauren Holcomb provided an update on organizational development. She reviewed the monthly newsletter and announced the upcoming deadline for the broadband network expansion grant.
8. Director Holliday then announced that Utopian Academy for the Arts successfully opened for its first day of school on August 14, 2014. She also noted that Governor Deal visited the school on August 21, 2014 and was very impressed with the staff and students.
9. Chairman Knapp then requested Mr. Stevens discuss the recent recommendations for approval and denial of new schools that applied to the SCSC during the 2014 petition cycle. Mr. Stevens

discussed the staff recommendations for each petitioner and addressed questions from commissioners.

10. Next, petitioners were allowed to address the SCSC prior to commissioners' votes on recommendation. Representatives from Brookhaven Innovation Academy (Bates Mattison), Byron-Peach Charter High School (Roy Lewis), Columbia County School for the Arts (Todd Shafer), Fulton Science Academy (Maria Beug-Deeb), Fulton Sunshine Academy (Metin Oguzmert), Foothills Education Charter High School (Sherry Gibney-Sherman), Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics (Cass Robinson), International Charter School of Atlanta (Kristine Evjen), and Southwest Georgia STEM Charter (Freddie Powell Sims) spoke in support of their respective charter petitions. Upon conclusion of petitioner comment, Chairman Knapp announced that votes would be taken individually by school.
11. Commissioner Lewis made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Rippner to approve the recommendation of denial for Brookhaven Innovation Academy. Prior to voting, Chairman Knapp called for discussion, and Commissioners Lewis, Perez, and Lowden encouraged the petitioners to continue developing their petition and apply again in the next cycle. At that point, Chairman Knapp called for votes on the motion to approve the recommendation for denial, and the motion was approved unanimously.
12. Commissioner Lowden made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Lewis to approve the recommendation for approval of Byron Peach Charter High School. There was no discussion, and this motion was approved unanimously.
13. Commissioner Williams made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Lewis to approve the recommendation for denial of Columbia County School for the Arts. There was no discussion, and this motion was approved unanimously.
14. Commissioner Lowden made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Hogg to approve the recommendation for denial of Fulton Science Academy High School. There was no discussion, and this motion was approved unanimously.
15. Commissioner Lewis made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Williams to approve the recommendation for denial of Fulton Sunshine Academy Elementary School. There was no discussion, and this motion was approved unanimously.
16. Commissioner Hogg made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Williams to approve the recommendation for approval of Foothills Education Charter High School. When Chairman Knapp called for discussion, Commissioner Lowden noted that FECHS fills a gap in Georgia in terms of dropout prevention. The motion was approved unanimously.
17. Commissioner Lewis made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Hogg to approve the recommendation for approval of Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics. There was no discussion, and this motion was approved unanimously.

18. Commissioner Perez made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Williams to approve the recommendation for approval of International Charter School of Atlanta. During discussion, Commissioner Lowden noted that this group had addressed the concerns raised by staff during last year's cycle and warranted approval. There was no further discussion, and this motion was approved unanimously.
19. Commissioner Hogg made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Rippner to approve the recommendation for denial of Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School. There was no discussion, and this motion was approved unanimously.
20. During the public comment portion of the meeting, David Bridges, President of ABAC, spoke in favor of rural petitioners in Southwest Georgia, Artesius Miller, Executive Director of Utopian Academy for the Arts, thanked the SCSC for its recent support and updated commissioners on Governor Deal's recent visit to the school, Janet Scott, legal counsel for the Peach County Board of Education spoke in opposition to the approval of the petition for Byron Peach Charter High School, and Monica Henson, Superintendent of Provost Academy, provided an enrollment update for Provost's Marietta campus.
21. There being no further business before the SCSC, Chairman Knapp asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Perez offered a motion and Commissioner Hogg provided a second. The motion was unanimously approved, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:50 a.m.