



# State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

## February Board Meeting

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### **Date and Time**

Wednesday February 26, 2025 at 10:00 AM EST

### **Location**

#### **SCSC Board Room**

1356B Twin Towers East,  
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE  
Atlanta, GA 30334

### **Virtual Access Information**

#### [Meeting Link](#)

+1 646 931 3860

Meeting ID: 844 2791 6648

Passcode: 965938

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1356 Twin Towers East,  
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

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### **Agenda**

Purpose Presenter

**I. Opening Items**

- A. Record Attendance Mike Dudgeon
- B. Call the Meeting to Order
- C. Approve November 20, 2025 Minutes Approve Minutes  
Mike Dudgeon
- D. Approve January 22, 2025 Minutes Approve Minutes  
Mike Dudgeon

**II. Updates and Announcements**

- A. Legislative Session Discuss Donovan Head
- B. Comprehensive Performance Framework & School Performance Review Discuss Katie Manthey
- C. Approved Auditor Program Discuss Carmen Freemire
- D. FY25 Petition Cycle Discuss Kristen Easterbrook
- E. Governance Training Discuss Michele Neely
- F. Office of Charter School Compliance - SBOE Rule Amendment Discuss Allen Mueller

**III. Action Items: Charter Amendments**

- A. Charter Amendment Vote Erin Wright
  - Coweta Charter Academy (Attendance Zone)
- B. Charter Amendment Vote Erin Wright
  - Fayette Classical Academy (Charter Term)
  - Cherokee Classical Academy (Charter Term)

Purpose Presenter

**C. Charter Amendment** Vote Erin Wright

- International Academy of Smyrna (Enrollment Preference)

**IV. Action Items: Charter Renewals**

**A. 5-Year Charter Renewal Recommendations** Vote Katie Manthey

- Academy of Classical Education
- Baconton Community Charter School
- Delta STEAM Academy
- DuBois Integrity Academy
- Ethos Classical Charter School
- Furlow Charter School
- Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics
- International Charter School of Atlanta
- Southwest Georgia STEM
- Spring Creek Charter School
- Yi Hwang Academy of Language Excellence

**B. Atlanta Unbound Academy: Conditional 5-Year Renewal Recommendation** Vote Katie Manthey

- Atlanta Unbound Academy

**C. Odyssey Charter School: Conditional 5-Year Renewal Recommendation** Vote Katie Manthey

- Odyssey Charter School

**D. Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School: 3-Year Renewal Recommendation** Vote Katie Manthey

- Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School

**E. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia - Non-Renewal Recommendation** Vote Katie Manthey

Purpose                      Presenter

- Destinations Career Academy of Georgia

**V. Additional Items from Commissioners**

**VI. Public Comment**

**VII. Executive Session**

- A.** Attorney-Client Privilege                      Vote                      Mike Dudgeon

**VIII. Closing Items**

- A.** Adjourn Meeting                      Vote                      Mike Dudgeon

# Coversheet

## Approve November 20, 2025 Minutes

**Section:** I. Opening Items  
**Item:** C. Approve November 20, 2025 Minutes  
**Purpose:** Approve Minutes  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Minutes for Called Board Meeting on November 20, 2024

DRAFT



# State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

## Minutes

### Called Board Meeting

Virtual

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#### Date and Time

Wednesday November 20, 2024 at 12:00 PM

#### Location

#### Virtual Access Information

[Meeting Link](#)

+1 309 205 3325

Meeting ID 819 1806 2326

Passcode: 478288

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1356 Twin Towers East,  
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

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#### Directors Present

B. Brockway (remote), B. Scafidi (remote), C. Good (remote), L. Millan (remote), M. Dudgeon (remote), T. Lowden (remote)

#### Directors Absent

J. Cole

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## I. Opening Items

### A. Record Attendance

### B. Call the Meeting to Order

M. Dudgeon called a meeting of the board of directors of State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia to order on Wednesday Nov 20, 2024 at 12:01 PM.

### C. Approve Minutes

T. Lowden made a motion to approve the minutes.

C. Good seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

## II. Announcements

### A. Announcements

- Hiring Updates- on October 1, we onboarded two new staff members
  - Molly Gassman (School Support & Outreach Specialist, School Support & Outreach Division)
  - Guin Jones (Petitions Coordinator, New Schools Division)
- Next meeting will be on February 26, 2024.

## III. Officer Elections

### A. Chair

Officer Nominations

Commissioner Brockway nominated Mike Dudgeon as Chair. The nomination was unanimously approved.

### B. Vice chair

Dr. Good was nominated by Commissioner Millan and Commissioner Scafidi as Vice Chair. The nomination was unanimously approved.

## IV. Charter School Accountability

### A. Academic Accountability

- The Research and Evaluation Division presented in the following areas:

- [2023-2024 Georgia Milestones Results \(Math\)](#)
- [Graduation Rate Results](#)

SCSC Commissioners asked clarifying questions regarding the scores and data.

## B. Financial Accountability

- **The Finance Division presented the following information:**

- [FY24 Audit Update](#)- Audits were due from schools on November 1. Forty-one out of 49 schools submitted on or before the deadline, with two schools submitting one week late. The deadline was extended to December 2 for two schools due to issues stemming from the recent hurricanes and another because of lingering issues the school has with separating from their prior ESP. These schools will earn full points if they submit their audits by the new deadline. The SCSC is working with the three remaining schools to submit their audits by December 2 so they can receive partial points on the CPF.

## V. SCSC Division Updates

### A. School Support & Outreach Division

- **Governance training dates**—Governance training is scheduled for two dates. The first will be held at the Loudermilk Center in Atlanta on February 11th and 12th, and the second will be held at the Classic Center in Athens on April 22nd and 23rd. The first day will take place from 12:30 to 5:00, and training will be focused on new governing board members. The second day will take place from 9:00 to 5:00 for all governing board members. Schools are encouraged to send administrators to participate as well.
- **Governance training guidance**—Guidance on the newly approved SCSC Governance Training Policy will be released this week. The guidance provides definitions for “new” and “tenured” board members, details on required training topics, and instructions on when and how alternate providers may be used.

### B. Office of Charter School Compliance

- The Senior Director of the Office of Charter School Compliance is working with the General Counsel, the Director of New Schools, and the team on a draft State Board of Education rule amendment to align state and local charter petition timelines. The Executive Director has also had positive conversations with SBOE Chairman Stan DeJarnett and Charter/Flexibility Committee Chair Scott Sweeney who have been supportive of aligning timelines.
- The objective is to ensure local authorizers make official decisions on start-up charter petitions by June 30. They must have a window to approve/deny charter petitions that is 90 days or less. The petitioner can request an extension from the authorizer



if the final board decision is made before June 30. The timeline must be posted on the local authorizer's website by January 1st.

- Staff aims to submit the board rule amendment draft to GaDOE's General Counsel by the end of the year, allowing time for review and consideration by the SBOE at their February meeting for enactment. The revised rule approval vote would take place at the March SBOE meeting after 30 days of public comment has been exhausted.

## VI. Action Items

### A. Charter Amendment - Scintilla Charter Academy

C. Good made a motion to Approve the staff recommendation to add a statutory enrollment priority for Pre-Kindergarten.

B. Brockway seconded the motion.

[Charter Amendment Recommendation](#)

School representatives spoke in favor of the recommendation.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

## VII. Closing Items

### A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 12:33 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
M. Dudgeon

# Coversheet

## Approve January 22, 2025 Minutes

**Section:** I. Opening Items  
**Item:** D. Approve January 22, 2025 Minutes  
**Purpose:** Approve Minutes  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Minutes for Called Meeting on January 22, 2025

DRAFT



# State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

## Minutes

### Called Meeting

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#### Date and Time

Wednesday January 22, 2025 at 9:30 AM

#### Location

Virtual

[Meeting Link](#)

The SCSC will hold a meeting via teleconference to consider the upcoming renewal cycle due to a winter weather advisory issued for the planned meeting location.

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239 Cedar Lane, Covington, GA 30014  
2N-2100 Conference Room

Notice was posted on the SCSC Website and given to the legal organ.

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#### Directors Present

B. Brockway (remote), B. Scafidi (remote), C. Good (remote), L. Millan (remote), M. Dudgeon (remote), T. Lowden (remote)

#### Directors Absent

J. Cole

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### I. Opening Items

#### A. Record Attendance

## **B. Call the Meeting to Order**

M. Dudgeon called a meeting of the board of directors of State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia to order on Wednesday Jan 22, 2025 at 9:34 AM. Chairman Dudgeon welcomed commissioners. He noted the pivot to holding the meeting virtually and encouraged engagement in the virtual setting.

Executive Director, Donovan Head, acknowledged the work staff put into developing retreat content. He noted agenda updates and provided an overview of the meeting agenda. In addition, he thanked commissioners for agreeing to serve on renewal interview panels.

## **II. Review**

### **A. Review of SCSC Renewal Criteria and Values, Process and Timeline**

The Director of Research and Evaluation reviewed the SCSC renewal criteria and values.

## **III. Review**

### **A. School-Level Reviews**

The Director of Research & Evaluation discussed the performance track records of state charter schools eligible for a standard 5-year renewal based on the SCSC's renewal guidelines. Commissioners discussed these schools' histories, achievements, and challenges.

## **IV. Action item**

### **A. Pataula Charter Academy Amendment**

B. Scafidi made a motion to approve the staff recommendation to amend the Pataula Charter Academy's charter contract to add a pre-K enrollment preference.

T. Lowden seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

## **V. Review**

### **A. School-Level Reviews Continued**

The Director of Research & Evaluation discussed the performance of schools not eligible for a 5-year renewal according to the SCSC's renewal guidelines. Commissioners

discussed these schools' histories, achievements, and challenges and identified considerations to be discussed in the schools' renewal interviews.

## **VI. Discussion**

### **A. High-Risk Schools Discussion**

The General Counsel, Director of Finance, and Director of New Schools discussed schools that have been designated as high-risk. Commissioners discussed the schools' challenges, and options for addressing the high-risk circumstances of the schools.

## **VII. Closing Items**

### **A. Concluding Remarks**

Chairman Dudgeon thanked staff for organizing the retreat and commissioners for their attention. He reminded staff and commissioners that the focus in all decisions should be Georgia's students.

Commissioner Lowden applauded the staff's work and expressed gratitude for the support of the commission team following President Jimmy Carter's death.

### **B. Adjourn Meeting**

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 3:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
M. Dudgeon

# Coversheet

## Charter Amendment

**Section:** III. Action Items: Charter Amendments  
**Item:** A. Charter Amendment  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Coweta Attendance Zone Amendment Rec.pdf



## State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

### Action Item – Staff Recommendation

#### Item Summary

Charter Amendment – Coweta Charter Academy (Attendance Zone)

#### Recommendation

SCSC staff recommend that the SCSC Board of Commissioners approve an amendment to the Coweta Charter Academy’s charter contract to expand the school’s attendance zone.

#### Rationale

Coweta Charter Academy is requesting to amend its attendance zone to add Fulton County School System, Clayton County School System, Henry County School System, Troup County School System, Carroll County Schools, Heard County School System, Thomaston-Upson Schools, Lamar County Schools, Douglas County School System, Cobb County School District, and DeKalb Country School District. The school has received several requests for enrollment from families outside of its current attendance zone. The school’s facility can serve over 800 students, but enrollment is presently around 500. Therefore, the school would like to provide an opportunity for interested families outside of the school’s current attendance zone to increase school choice in the area.

#### Strategic Plan Alignment

Objective: Increase charter school choice in communities with few or no options.

# Coversheet

## Charter Amendment

**Section:** III. Action Items: Charter Amendments  
**Item:** B. Charter Amendment  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:**  
Fayette & Cherokee Classical Academy Amendment.Charter Terms Rec.pdf





## State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

### Action Item – Staff Recommendation

#### Item Summary

Charter Amendment – Cherokee Classical Academy Amendment (Charter Term)  
Charter Amendment – Fayette Classical Academy Amendment (Charter Term)

#### Recommendation

SCSC staff recommend that the SCSC Board of Commissioners approve amendments to Cherokee Classical Academy and Fayette Classical Academy’s charter contracts to amend the schools’ charter terms. If the recommendation is approved, Cherokee Classical Academy will be approved to operate from 2025 to 2030, and Fayette Classical Academy will be approved to operate from 2026 to 2031.

#### Rationale

Liberty Classical Schools (LCS) is requesting to amend the charter terms for both the Cherokee Classical Academy and Fayette Classical Academy charter contracts. When the charters were approved, each school contemplated opening in different school years. The governing board of LCS initially planned to open Fayette Classical Academy first; however, due to changed facility situations with both campuses, LCS is now confident that Cherokee Classical Academy is on track to open for the 2025-2026 school year. Therefore, LCS would like to switch charter terms between Cherokee Classical Academy and Fayette Classical Academy.

#### Strategic Plan Alignment

Objective: Increase the number of academically superior state charter schools.

# Coversheet

## Charter Amendment

**Section:** III. Action Items: Charter Amendments  
**Item:** C. Charter Amendment  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** IAS Enrollment Priorities Amendment Rec.pdf



## State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

### Action Item – Staff Recommendation

#### Item Summary

Charter Amendment – International Academy of Smyrna (Enrollment Priorities)

#### Recommendation

SCSC staff recommend that the SCSC Board of Commissioners approve an amendment to the International Academy of Smyrna’s charter contract to amend the school’s enrollment priorities.

#### Rationale

International Academy of Smyrna is requesting to amend its enrollment priorities to offer priority to students who matriculate from the school’s Pre-K program. This change will better meet the school’s vision of continuous and consistent educational programs and improve family satisfaction.

#### Strategic Plan Alignment

Objective: Increase the number of academically superior state charter schools.

# Coversheet

## 5-Year Charter Renewal Recommendations

**Section:** IV. Action Items: Charter Renewals  
**Item:** A. 5-Year Charter Renewal Recommendations  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Five-Year Renewal Rec Consolidated 2025.pdf



## State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

### Action Item – Staff Recommendation

#### Item Summary

Charter Renewal Recommendation for Academy for Classical Education, Baconton Community Charter School, Delta STEAM Academy, DuBois Integrity Academy, Ethos Classical Charter School, Furlow Charter School, Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics, International Charter School of Atlanta, Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School, Spring Creek Charter Academy and Yi Hwang Academy for Language Excellence.

#### Recommendation

SCSC staff recommend that the SCSC Board of Commissioners approve the renewal application for each of the above-mentioned schools by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute a five-year charter contract for the operation of a state charter school.

#### Rationale

Each of the above-mentioned schools have earned a standard five-year renewal by:

- i. outperforming the schools its students would otherwise attend in every year of the charter term or by earning a meets academic designation for a majority of the charter term (three out of four years) and earning an approaches standards designation in the one remaining year, and by
- ii. meeting or approaching financial and operational standards for a majority of the charter term and in the most recent year.

All evidence indicates that each school will continue to operate as a high-quality charter school consistent with the SCSC's mission and the educational goals of Georgia.

#### Strategic Plan Alignment

Objective: Increase charter school choice in communities with few or no options.

# Coversheet

## Atlanta Unbound Academy: Conditional 5-Year Renewal Recommendation

**Section:** IV. Action Items: Charter Renewals  
**Item:** B. Atlanta Unbound Academy: Conditional 5-Year Renewal  
Recommendation  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** AUA Renewal Rec 2025.pdf



## State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

### Action Item – Staff Recommendation

#### Item Summary

Charter Renewal Recommendation for Atlanta Unbound Academy

#### Recommendation

SCSC staff recommends that the SCSC Board of Commissioners approve the renewal application for Atlanta Unbound Academy by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute an abbreviated three-year charter contract for a K-8 school that will be automatically extended for two years upon written consent of the SCSC Executive Director when certain requirements are met.

#### Rationale

The SCSC recommends granting Atlanta Unbound Academy (AUA) a charter to operate the school for a three-year term beginning on July 1, 2025 and expiring on June 30, 2028; provided however that the term will be automatically extended for an additional two years until June 30, 2030 upon written consent of the SCSC Executive Director if:

- The school meets academic standards during the 2025-26 school year.
- The school meets or approaches financial standards for the 2025-26 school year (fiscal year 2026).

AUA is completing its first five-year charter contract. The school met academic and financial standards for the first three years of the charter term. The decline in scores for the 2023-24 school year correlate with AUA's facility transition, which has now been stabilized. By meeting the criteria noted above, the school can demonstrate that the issues created by the facility change no longer impact the school's quality or sustainability.

#### Strategic Plan Alignment

Objective: Increase charter school choice in communities with few or no options.

# Coversheet

## Odyssey Charter School: Conditional 5-Year Renewal Recommendation

<b>Section:</b>	IV. Action Items: Charter Renewals
<b>Item:</b>	C. Odyssey Charter School: Conditional 5-Year Renewal Recommendation
<b>Purpose:</b>	Vote
<b>Submitted by:</b>	
<b>Related Material:</b>	Odyssey Renewal Rec 2025.pdf





## State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

### Action Item – Staff Recommendation

#### Item Summary

Charter Renewal Recommendation for Odyssey Charter School

#### Recommendation

SCSC staff recommend that the SCSC Board of Commissioners approve the renewal application for Odyssey Charter School by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute an abbreviated three-year charter contract for a school that will be automatically extended for two years upon written consent of the SCSC Executive Director when certain requirements are met.

#### Rationale

SCSC recommend granting Odyssey Charter School (Odyssey) a charter to operate the school for a three-year term beginning on July 1, 2025 and expiring on June 30, 2028; provided however that the term will be automatically extended for an additional two years until June 30, 2030 upon written consent of the SCSC Executive Director if:

- The school meets academic standards for the 2025-26 school year.
- The school meets or approaches operational standards for the 2025-26 school year.

Odyssey is completing a five-year charter contract. The school met academic standards for the first three years of the current charter term and was designated as Approaches in the most recent year because it outperformed in the middle grade band and performed one point below in the elementary grade band.

Odyssey met or approached financial standards for a majority of the charter term and in the most recent year, demonstrating financial viability.

Historically, Odyssey has stable operational performance; however, in 2023 and 2024, the school had significant deficiencies related to SCSC internal monitoring and federal program compliance. By meeting the criteria noted above, the school can demonstrate that it is back on track to previous levels of performance.

#### Strategic Plan Alignment

Objective: Increase the number of academically superior state charter schools.

# Coversheet

## Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School: 3-Year Renewal Recommendation

**Section:** IV. Action Items: Charter Renewals  
**Item:** D. Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School: 3-Year Renewal Recommendation  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Georgia Fugees Renewal Rec 2025.pdf



## State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

### Action Item – Staff Recommendation

#### Item Summary

Charter Renewal Recommendation for Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School

#### Recommendation

SCSC staff recommends that the SCSC Board of Commissioners approve the renewal application for Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School by authorizing the SCSC Chair to execute an abbreviated three-year charter contract for the operation of a state charter school.

#### Rationale

Georgia Fugees Academy Charter School (GFACS) is completing its first five-year charter contract. GFACS met or approached academic standards by outperforming or performing on par with the schools its students would otherwise attend in two years of the charter term. In the most recent year for which data are available, GFACS outperformed the comparison score in the middle-grade band but did not outperform in the high-school grade band. However, 60 percent of student enrollment is in grades 6-8; as such, the majority of students are receiving a better educational option.

GFACS met or approached financial standards for a majority of the charter term and in the most recent year, demonstrating financial viability.

Generally, the school has stable operational performance; however, in 2023 and 2024, the school had significant deficiencies related specifically to federal program compliance. The board and school leadership are implementing corrective actions to remedy previously identified issues and have processes in place to improve the school's operational standing on the CPF.

#### Strategic Plan Alignment

Objective: Increase charter school choice in communities with few or no options.

# Coversheet

## Destinations Career Academy of Georgia - Non-Renewal Recommendation

**Section:** IV. Action Items: Charter Renewals  
**Item:** E. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia - Non-Renewal  
Recommendation  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:**  
**Related Material:** Destinations Renewal Rec 2025.pdf



## State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

### Action Item – Staff Recommendation

#### Item Summary

Charter Renewal Recommendation for Destinations Career Academy of Georgia

#### Recommendation

SCSC staff recommends that the SCSC Board of Commissioners non-renew the charter contract for Destinations Career Academy of Georgia. If the recommendation of non-renewal is approved, Destinations Career Academy will cease operation as a state charter school effective June 30, 2025.

#### Rationale

Destinations Career Academy is completing a three-year charter contract. The school did not meet the academic or operational eligibility criteria for renewal. It did not outperform the schools its students would otherwise attend for a majority of the charter term, and it failed to demonstrate operational compliance in both years for which data are available. Although the school met financial standards, the school's renewal interview raised significant concerns regarding the board's ability to prioritize the school's academic outcomes and operational performance in its financial decision-making.

#### Strategic Plan Alignment

Objective: Increase the number of academically superior state charter schools.