

APPROVED



State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

Minutes

April Board Meeting

2-day Meeting | 4/26 - 4/27

Date and Time

Wednesday April 26, 2023 at 10:00 AM

Location

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

Virtual Access Information:

<https://meet.goto.com/SCSCGA/april2023boardmeeting>

Dial-in Information:

[+1 \(571\) 317-3122](tel:+15713173122) // [687-497-093](tel:687497093)

State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

April 2023 Board Meeting
April 26-27, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Directors Present

B. Brockway, B. Scafidi, C. Good (remote), J. Cole, L. Millan, M. Dudgeon

Directors Absent

T. Lowden

Guests Present

K. Thompson

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

B. Brockway called a meeting of the board of directors of State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia to order on Wednesday Apr 26, 2023 at 10:00 AM.

II. Approval of SCSC Meeting Minutes

A. March 29, 2023 Meeting Minutes

L. Millan made a motion to approve the minutes from March Board Meeting on 03-29-23.

M. Dudgeon seconded the motion.

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

III. Commissioner School Visits

A. Commissioner School Visits

Commissioners discussed past school visits and the upcoming school visit to Ethos Classical Charter School.

IV. Organizational Development

A. Organizational Development

The SCSC Director of Charter Development provided an update on past and upcoming SCSC trainings.

V. Pre-Opening Schools

A. Pre-Opening Schools

The SCSC currently has 7 new schools and 2 replication schools in the pre-opening pipeline. To date, two schools have elected to defer their opening until Fall 2024.

VI. Petitions

A. Petitions

The SCSC received 12 petitions this year for start-up charter schools when the application portal closed on March 17th. The SCSC is currently completing substantive reviews of petitions. Capacity interviews for petitioners will begin the week of May 15.

VII. Rule Update

A. Rule Update

The amended Sites and Facilities rule (691-2-.06) and the new Suspension and Probation rule (691-2-.10) became effective on April 18, 2023. These are available on the SCSC website.

VIII. Accountability

A. Operational Accountability

• Monitoring

- The SCSC will send schools a monitoring feedback survey on May 1. The survey will close on May 28. Schools are encouraged to share feedback concerning this year's monitoring cycle.

• Unified Enrollment System

- The SCSC will share a survey with schools regarding the UES. SCSC staff are very interested in hearing feedback from our schools and their communities and would greatly appreciate comprehensive responses and candor.

B. Financial Accountability

• Audit Update

- Cirrus Academy Charter School still has not submitted its audit for FY22.

• Approved Auditors Program

- Approved auditors were notified of their selection. Schools will select their auditors for FY23 soon.

IX. Executive Session

A. Executive Session

- Commissioner Milan motioned to enter executive session for personnel discussion. Commissioner Dudgeon seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.
- Commissioner Milan motioned to exit executive session. Commissioner Dudgeon seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

X. Additional Items from Commissioners

A.

None

No additional discussion.

XI. Public Comment

A. Manqudius Fullwood

Manqudius Fullwood spoke on behalf of Miles Ahead to express how impressed he is with the school's technology and innovation focus. As a parent, he is impressed with the curriculum, transportation offerings, vegetarian meal plan offerings, and social-emotional learning focus.

XII. Recess For Lunch

A. Recess For Lunch

No additional discussion.

XIII. Performance Reviews Day 1

A. Performance Reviews Day 1

• Cirrus Academy Charter School - School representatives presented their plan to improve performance in the areas of

◦ Academics:

- The school failed to meet academic standards in any year of the previous charter term.
- The school underperformed school-level comparison on Content Mastery in elementary and middle-grade band.
- MAP winter benchmark project 6.5% and 11.5% of students to achieve Proficient or better in math and ELA, respectively, on spring Georgia Milestones.
- The school was identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) for 2021-2022 school year as a school performing within the lowest 5%.

▪ Finances:

- The school's audit has not been submitted as of April 26, 2023, the submission deadline was Nov. 1, 2022.
- In previous years, Cirrus failed to meet standards related to Enrollment Variance and Default related to bond covenants because the school's actual enrollment was less than projected.

▪ Operations:

- In the last two years, the school had findings indicating it is out of compliance with internal controls, expenditures, inventory, drawdowns, and cost principles when expending federal funds.
- Student enrollment declined from the previous school year by more than 70 students, according to the Oct. FTE counts.
- **Cherokee Charter Academy - School representatives presented their plan to improve performance in the areas of**
 - Academics:
 - The school underperformed school-level comparison in the elementary grade band.
 - The school underperformed school-level comparison on Content Mastery in middle-grade band.
 - The school's rate of proficiency among Black and Hispanic subgroups considerably lower than white counterparts, according to 2022 Georgia Milestones results.
 - Finance:
 - Third year in a row the school submitted a late audit; more than 4 months past the deadline in FY22.
 - Failed to earn any points on the Debt-to-Income measure in FY 22.
 - Operations & Governance:
 - Only three members are currently on the governing board.
 - Student enrollment has declined in the last several years (822-March 2018, 611-March 2023).
- **Fulton Leadership Academy - School representatives presented their plan to improve performance in the areas of**
 - Academics:
 - The school underperformed school-level comparison in the middle-grade band on the Content Mastery measure.
 - The school failed to outperform on either measure in the high school grade band.
 - 7% of students achieved a Proficient or above level on Algebra I/Coordinate Algebra EOC.
 - 11% of students achieved a level of Proficient or above in middle grades math.
 - Finance:
 - Three out of the last four years, FLA has failed to earn any points on the Enrollment Variance measure, meaning the school has not projected enrollment or revenue to support adequate budgeting practices.
 - Three out of the last four years, FLA has failed to earn any points on the Debt to Asset Ratio measure within the Financial section of the CPF, meaning the school has a high proportion of operations that are funded by debt.

- Operations:
 - In the last two years, the school failed to meet standards related to federal education, federal financial, and federal employee qualification requirements.
 - In the 2021-22 school year, FLA lost CPF points related to Georgia Open Meetings and Open Records Act.
 - FLA's student enrollment has consistently declined in the last few years, losing anywhere from ten to forty students annually.
- **SLAM Academy of Atlanta - School representatives presented their plan to improve performance in the areas of**
 - Academics
 - SLAM Underperformed school-level comparison in elementary grade band.
 - There were Too Few Students in middle-grade band to report scores.
 - 4% of elementary students achieved proficiency in math and ELA.
 - SLAM was identified for Comprehensive Supports and Improvement (CSI) for 2021-2022 as a school performing within the lowest 5%
 - Finance
 - SLAM submitted its audit over three weeks past the deadline.
 - Since opening, SLAM has never earned points on the Enrollment Variance financial measure, meaning the school has not projected enrollment or revenue in a manner that supports adequate budgeting practices.
 - SLAM failed to meet Unrestricted Days Cash and Debt to Income measures, meaning the school could struggle to meet short-term financial liabilities.
 - Operations
 - Federal Program monitoring found that SLAM Academy failed to comply with federal education, financial, and employee qualification requirements.
 - All SLAM board members did not participate in required governance training in 2021-22.
 - The SLAM Board Chair recently transitioned to School Leader.
- **Atlanta Heights Academy - School representatives presented their plan to improve performance in finance:**
 - Atlanta Heights Academy submitted its audit over three months past the deadline.
 - This is the second year in a row the school is not meeting standards, specifically:
 - Current Ratio and Debt to Asset Ratio
 - .08 (Meets > 1) and 125.4% (Meets < 95%)

- Contracted service fee payable is the largest liability (\$4.5 million)
- **Northwest Classical Academy - School representatives presented their plan to improve performance in the areas of operations:**
 - Northwest Classical Academy submitted its financial audit late.
 - The school has hired a new CFO.
 - The school failed to comply with all rules related to budget adoption.
 - The school's handbook and policy compliance.

XIV. Recess

A. Day 1 of Performance Reviews Conclude

No additional discussion.

XV. Recess concludes – Day 2

A. Recess concludes – Day 2

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m. on April 27, 2023, due to lack of quorum.

XVI. 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 10:37 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
B. Brockway