

APPROVED



State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

Minutes

June Board Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday June 26, 2024 at 10:00 AM

Location

SCSC Board Room

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

Virtual Access Information

[Meeting Link](#)

Phone Access: +1 301 715 8592

Meeting ID: 854 3776 1028

Passcode: 381937

State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

June 2024 Board Meeting

June 26, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Directors Present

B. Brockway, C. Good, J. Cole (remote), M. Dudgeon, T. Lowden (remote)

Directors Absent

B. Scafidi, L. Millan

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 Jun 26, 2024 at 10:05 AM.

II. Approval of SCSC Meeting Minutes

A. April 24, 2024, Meeting Minutes

M. Dudgeon made a motion to approve the minutes from April Board Meeting on 04-24-24.

unanimous consent

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

III. Announcements

A. Announcements

1. Please note that the SCSC has updated its public comments policy. The updated policy is available on the SCSC website. The following updates were made:

- To comment during an SCSC meeting, guests complete the public comment form on the SCSC website no later than 9:00 AM the day of the meeting. In addition, guests wishing to comment during the meeting must attend the meeting in person.
- The SCSC welcomes written comments at any time. Written communications will be shared with commissioners consistent with the SCSC Communications Policy. However, written comments submitted through the public comment form will be shared with commissioners in advance of the next regularly scheduled meeting, provided they are received in the public comment form by 10:00 AM the morning before the meeting. They will not be read aloud during the meeting.

2. Scott Riley is leaving the SCSC effective June 30. He will return to his love of teaching as a 6th-grade social studies teacher at Tucker Middle School. The SCSC thanks him for his years of service to the commission, schools, students, and to the State of Georgia.

3. Henry Siebentritt will be the new SCSC Evaluations Analyst, effective July 1. Henry has been interning with the SCSC for the past six months and brings classroom teaching experience. He is a "Double Dawg," holding both a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in education from the University of Georgia.

IV. HB318 Transfer

A. Updates

- The Georgia General Assembly overwhelmingly passed HB 318 during this year's session, moving the Office of Charter School Compliance and Flexibility, its duties and responsibilities, and its three staff positions from the Georgia Department of Education to the State Charter Schools Commission. Governor Kemp signed it into law, effective July 1.
- The SCSC leadership team has been working diligently on the plan for a smooth transfer, collaborating with the Office of Planning and Budget and GaDOE.
- The funding being transferred only covers the state-funded portions of each position, leaving out funding for much of what the SCSC will need to perform these statutory duties effectively.
- The SCSC will be working with the OPB, House and Senate Budget Offices, and the Governor's Office to ensure adequate funding is provided in the AFY24 budget.
- This will be a standalone line item in the budget, and state charter school withhold funds cannot, by law, be used to support locally authorized charter schools.
- The priority is to hire the Director for this new division. The position has been posted, and we are receiving applications. Only those meeting the minimum requirements will be interviewed.
- Once the director is fully on board, we will immediately begin planning the rest of the team and organizing everything to be in place by the beginning of the school year.

V. Charter Development

A. Training

As a reminder, all governing board members have until June 30th to complete their annual governance training requirements for FY24. Information about alternate training providers can be found on the SCSC website. Additional information about the Governance Training Certification process will be going out to all schools in July.

Visit the Training Page of the SCSC website for real-time updates and additional information.

<https://scsc.georgia.gov/school-resources/training-opportunities>

VI. Pre-Opening Schools

A. Update

2 new schools that are scheduled to open this fall, Excelsior Village Academies in Stockbridge and Rocky Creek Charter Academy in Augusta. Both schools have met critical pre-opening milestones and remain on track for opening this fall.

VII. Petitions

A. Update

The SCSC completed interviews of 10 start-up petitioners and one replication petitioner the week of June 3. Thank you to all the Commissioners and other panelists who participated in those interviews. The SCSC is formulating recommendations for those petitions and anticipates making them to the board at its next meeting in July.

VIII. Accountability

A. Finance

All but two state charters have submitted their selected auditors for the SCSC approved auditor program. The other two have decided to use their own auditor. As a reminder, the SCSC pays the audit only for schools that participate in this program. All audits will be due November 1.

B. Operations

LEA Legal Obligations Guidance Document has been updated to include FY 24 legislation applicable to state charter schools. Schools may review the guidance on the SCSC Operations Guidance webpage. A link will also be provided in the June SCSC newsletter.

C. School Probation Announcements

The RISE Schools were placed on probation on May 10, 2024, because its governing board demonstrated an inability to provide effective leadership or otherwise oversee the state charter school's operations. During the 2023-2024 school year, the school faced the possibility of mid-year closure due to budget shortfalls caused by over-projected student enrollment.

The documentation provided as a requirement of probation showed a plan to sustain school operations for the 2024-2025 school year. SCSC is not recommending suspension or termination of the School's charter contract at this time. However, concerns remain regarding the governing board's ability to provide effective leadership under these conditions. The School will remain on probation until June 30, 2025.

The school's probationary reporting requirements are robust. If, after reviewing interim reports, it appears that the school's continued operation would be contrary to the interests of the school's community, SCSC staff will request that this board immediately suspend school operations and issue a notice of intent to hold a hearing to determine if charter termination is appropriate.

Representatives from the school spoke to the challenges the school faced and how they plan to correct these shortfalls. Commissioners asked questions regarding enrollment, staffing, governance, and the parent community.

IX. Action Items

A. Charter Amendment - International Charter School of Atlanta

T. Lowden made a motion to approve the SCSC staff recommendation that the SCSC Board of Commissioners approve an amendment to the International Charter School of Atlanta's charter contract to amend the school's mission-specific goals.

B. Brockway seconded the motion.

[ICS Atlanta Mission Specific Goals Amendment.pdf](#)

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

B. Agency Budget Actions

C. Good made a motion to approve the SCSC recommendation that the SCSC Board of Commissioners adopt of FY25 administrative withhold, adopt of FY25 operational budget, and approve the return of unused FY24 administrative withhold funds.

B. Brockway seconded the motion.

Commissioners and staff discussed new changes to the budget from the passage of House Bill 318.

[Action Item - Budget Recommendation.pdf](#)

[FY2025 Budget Presentation Final.pdf](#)

[FY25 Budget Narrative_Final.pdf](#)

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

X. Public Comment

A. Public Comment

Juanchella Francis and Nandi Edouard spoke in favor of the SCSC approving The Simple Vue Academy.

Michael Bernard and Cherise Jefferson discussed end of year testing policies and issues in state charter schools.

XI. Executive Session

A. Personnel

B. Brockway made a motion to go into executive sessions to discuss personnel matters as authorized by O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(2).

C. Good seconded the motion.

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

XII. 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 11:49 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Dudgeon