

APPROVED



State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia

Minutes

Governance & Policy Retreat

Date and Time

Friday August 9, 2024 at 9:30 AM

Location

Amicalola Falls State Park & Lodge
418 Amicalola Falls Road
Dawsonville, Georgia 30534

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Dawsonville, GA 30534

Directors Present

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

Directors Absent

J. Cole, T. Lowden

Directors who arrived after the meeting opened

B. Scafidi, L. Millan

Directors who left before the meeting adjourned

C. Good

Guests Present

A. Mueller, C. Lockett, Carmen Freemire, D. Head, E. Wright, K. Easterbrook, K. Manthey, Michele Neely, T. Leach

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

B. Scafidi arrived.

M. Dudgeon called a meeting of the board of directors of State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia to order on Friday Aug 9, 2024 at 1:08 PM.

L. Millan arrived.

II. Welcome

A. Enhancing SCSC Support Programs

The Chairman welcomed staff and commissioners and encouraged the group to identify ways to supplement the SCSC's compliance functions with support to encourage school success. The Executive Director acknowledged the contributions of SCSC staff in organizing the retreat and assisting in the SCSC's reorganization strategy.

III. SCSC Re-organization Goals and Priorities

A. Overview of Organizational Changes

The Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, and Director of Finance discussed the staff's approach to the SCSC reorganization.

B. Integration of New Functions

The Senior Director for the Office of Charter School Compliance and Senior Director for School Support and Outreach (effective October 1, 2024) discussed how the functions of these divisions will integrate into the SCSC's reorganized structure.

C. Commissioner Discussion

The SCSC Chairman led a discussion about the SCSC's priorities and enhancing the services and support the SCSC provides to charter schools.

IV. Operational Monitoring

A. Monitoring Overview

The SCSC's Senior Associate General Counsel and General Counsel presented an overview of the SCSC's operations monitoring practices, operational performance

standards, and historical school performance. Staff and commissioners brainstormed ways to ensure that operations monitoring captures what is intended and is a useful tool for monitoring the operational health of state charter schools.

V. Academic Accountability

A. Comprehensive Performance Framework (CPF) - Academic Standards

The SCSC Director of Research & Evaluation proposed updates to the Comprehensive Performance Framework (CPF) academic standards and renewal guidelines.

Commissioners asked clarifying questions on the recommendations. Staff will finalize initial recommendations for discussion during the regularly scheduled August meeting.

B. Renewal Guidelines

The Director of Research & Evaluation proposed updated renewal guidelines.

Commissioners asked clarifying questions on the recommendations. Staff will finalize initial recommendations for discussion during the regularly scheduled August meeting.

VI. Charter Petitions

A. Petition Recommendations for FY25

The General Counsel and Director of Charter Development discussed recommendations for FY25 petition priorities and clarified petition processing procedures. Commissioners asked clarifying questions about the recommendations. Staff will take commissioners' feedback and develop recommendations to present during a regularly scheduled SCSC meeting.

VII. Concluding Remarks & Recess

A. Opportunities for Collaboration

The Executive Director discussed opportunities to strengthen the charter school landscape through collaboration with the Office of Charter School Compliance. The Senior Director for the Office of Charter School Compliance shared specifics about local authorizing dynamics, and the commissioners and staff shared general ideas on optimizing the SCSC's reorganization to achieve its objectives.

The Chairman encouraged staff to continue to think of ways to promote school success.
C. Good left at 4:45 PM.

VIII. Return from Recess (9:15 AM, August 10, 2024)

A. Recap of Day 1.

The Executive Director reviewed the discussions from Day 1. The Chairman made additional recommendations on updating the petition evaluation process.

IX. School Closures

A. Closure Process

The Director of Charter Development provided an overview of closure requirements. She discussed challenges from the recent school closures, including transition plans, school records, website requirements, stakeholder notices, and surety bonds. Commissioners and staff discussed ways to address the challenges and lessons learned from recent school closures.

X. SCSC Rule & Policy Items

A. House Bill 409

The General Counsel reviewed House Bill 409, which permits Education Service Providers (ESP) to employ teachers and other instructional faculty and staff at charter schools. Commissioners and staff discussed the need to adjust SCSC practices given the new legislation.

B. Alternative Petition Processes

The Chairman directed staff to develop a targeted petition process to encourage petitions from high-quality existing operators and to evaluate scaling capacity.

C. Governance Training Requirements

The staff discussed developing a policy that clarifies training standards for state charter school governing boards. Staff and commissioners discussed separate requirements for new and existing board members.

Commissioners directed staff to develop a recommendation for training requirements to ensure new boards are informed of their obligations, reduce redundancy for tenured board members, provide updates on requirements annually, and align the proposed changes with the relevant statutes.

XI. Board Relations Items

A. Communications

The Executive Director reviewed the process for exchanging information between staff and commissioners and sought recommendations on any changes or updates.

B. FY25 Meeting Calendar

The Executive Director sought feedback on the meeting calendar for 2025. Commissioners discussed ensuring enough meetings to cover petitions pending local denial decisions. Additional important dates were highlighted, such as petition capacity interviews, conference dates, and renewal and new school visits.

C. Renewal School Visit

The Director of Research & Evaluation sought scheduling availability from commissioners for renewal school visits.

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 12:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Dudgeon