



State Charter Schools Foundation of Georgia

Minutes

SCSF Board Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday April 11, 2024 at 12:00 PM

Location

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

This meeting will occur in person in the Board Room of the State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia.

Join virtually at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88223521001>

Directors Present

A. Welcher, C. Good (remote), D. Head, G. Rogers, L. Jackson (remote), M. Smith (remote), S. Quinn, W. Campbell, Y. Mack (remote)

Directors Absent

C. Sears, F. Konteh, J. Louis, L. Olens

Ex Officio Members Present

M. Neely

Non Voting Members Present

M. Neely

Guests Present

A. Chen, S. Sweeney

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Welcher called a meeting of the board of directors of State Charter Schools Foundation of Georgia to order on Thursday Apr 11, 2024 at 12:22 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

D. Head made a motion to approve the minutes from SCSF Called Board Meeting on 02-20-24.

S. Quinn seconded the motion.

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

II. Governance

A. Governance Committee Report

Gabrielle Rogers welcomed the following new board member:

- Mr. William (Bill) Campbell, Senior Account Executive at Fluxx; experienced nonprofit executive and fundraiser; local charter school parent

She also reminded board members to (1) give generously to the SCSF to support direct service to charter schools and (2) participate in at least one community or school event per fiscal year.

III. Financial Report

A. Presentation of Financial Reports

Michele Neely presented the SCSF's current financial reports.

B. Financial Outlook

Michele Neely provided an update on the SCSF's financial outlook.

CSP - The SCSF has been awarded \$38,295,000 by the U.S. Dept. of Education for the Charter Schools Program State Entity program to continue and expand the Charter Growth Initiative. Our budget has been approved, and we have drawn a total of \$959,938.62, to cover operational and program expenses through the end of calendar year 2024 and begin providing funds to subgrantees.

Operational support - We entered into an FY2024 contract with the SCSC for \$132,500 to support our operational expenses. We have received \$94,000 so far.

Grants & fundraising - We have applied for a matching grant from Reading Is Fundamental. We received \$750 in sponsorships for the art contest and so far \$250 for the Shining Star Teachers program (several additional possibilities). We need more undesignated donations. We have been asked to raise funds to support facility needs at state charter schools, and we are working on building a grant fund for existing schools with LIIF, a lending partner.

IV. Georgia Strategic Charter School Growth Initiative

A. Approve Revised CSP Subgrants

C. Good made a motion to approve revised CSP subgrants.

S. Quinn seconded the motion.

Michele Neely provided some additional context for the vote.

In February, the SCSF board approved CSP subgrants. Two schools were awarded Planning and Implementation Subgrants (Excelsior Village Academies, Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics). Since this time, SCSF staff received additional information and secured approval from the U.S. Dept. of Education to modify the structure of the subgrants.

- Current: Planning Subgrant \$100,000 to be used only for school leader salary; Implementation Subgrant \$1,250,000 to be used after school opening
- Proposed: One subgrant of \$1,350,000 with Planning and Implementation periods; no limitations on Planning expenditures within allowable expenses.

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

Roll Call

C. Good	Aye
J. Louis	Absent
G. Rogers	Aye
D. Head	Aye
C. Sears	Absent
L. Jackson	Aye
Y. Mack	Aye
L. Olens	Absent
F. Konteh	Absent
S. Quinn	Aye
M. Smith	Aye
W. Campbell	Aye
A. Welcher	Abstain

B.

Charter Growth Initiative Update

Michele Neely gave an update on the Georgia Strategic Charter School Growth Initiative (Charter Growth Initiative).

The GEER II grant expired on September 30, 2023. The SCSF expended \$4,088,455.72 during the grant term.

- Onsite monitoring was completed with no major findings. Most findings were related to improper inventory management or coding of items required to be maintained in an inventory.
- The charter for 7 Pillars Career Academy with Clayton County Schools will expire in June. They have applied for authorization with the SCSC. If they are not authorized, we will seek guidance on any actions we need to take. The SCSC will vote in April.

CSP State Entity Grant

- Project revision approved by USEd to make one subgrant award instead of splitting it into separate Planning and Implementation subgrants. Allowable expenses will be based upon the period - Planning or Implementation, but all funds will be available throughout.
- Additional project revision requests will be made for the following:
 - Open up another subgrant round in April. Plan on opening two rounds annually going forward: Spring - expansions, Fall - new and replicating schools.
 - Revise Request for Applications document to allow for flexibility on definition of grade band expansions; change to Planning and Implementation periods.
- New School Leader Fellowship in progress - Excelsior Village Academy, Miles Ahead, The Anchor School, Sankofa Montessori (including Year 1 schools)
- Replication and Expansion Cohort program in progress - Liberty Classical Schools, Spring Creek Charter Academy, International Charter Academy of Georgia, Chattahoochee Hills Charter School

V. Direct Support to Schools

A. Select Shining Star Teachers

S. Quinn made a motion to approve 2023-24 Shining Star Teachers.

D. Head seconded the motion.

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

B. Book Vending Machine Awards

W. Campbell made a motion to approve the two Book Vending Machine grant recipients.

S. Quinn seconded the motion.

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

VI. Staff Report

A. Update on Current Organization Activities

Molly Gassman provided an update on SCSF programs.

Program activities since last board meeting:

- Attended the Atlanta School Choice Expo (hosted by GeorgiaCAN) and the GCSA conference to feature FindaGaCharter.org and distribute I Love My GA Charter merchandise
- Attended Charter Schools Day at the Georgia state capitol with the SCSC, GCSA, and various Georgia charter school students, leaders, and community members
- Built out our grants portal to serve our CSP subgrant program as well as the art contest, book vending machine grant, and other opportunities
- Collected nominations for the 2024 *Shining Star Teacher* program
- Continuing to offer free courses on inclusive education for schools (11 schools have registered)
- Continuing weekly school newsletters
- Hosted two school webinars – one with NorthStar Ed Partners (navigating strategic planning and consulting services), one with EF Educational Tours (travel-based and experiential learning opportunities)
- Maintaining the FindaGaCharter site, contracting with a new web developer for support
- Planned two laptop distribution events (giving away 400 devices) for metro Atlanta state charter school students, happening later this Spring
- Received and processed applications for the Book Vending Machine grant program
- Received 275 student art submissions (from 17 state charter schools) for the 2024 *Art of Connection: Exhibition of Student Art*
- Visited Ivy Preparatory Academy with the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta to see the impact of their emergency aid grant (wellness room, therapy dog, building repair)
- Michele presented three sessions at the GCSA conference, two sessions at the SCSC Governance Training in Athens, and a session at the SCSC New Schools Orientation

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 1:47 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. Sweeney