



## GCSA Weekly Update

**Dear Jeniffer,**

Please see below current News on the Georgia Charter Schools movement.

From the Staff at GCSA

### **GCSA - NEWS & EVENTS**

#### **[Georgia should make it easier for charter schools to open](#)**

**By: State Representative Jan Jones**

"Pending legislation would give Georgia parents more options in public education when schools fail their children's needs. It's uncomfortable to the status quo, but it's a critical piece in transforming education so all 1.6 million public school students can have a promising future.

The legislation would facilitate more quality public charter schools to give parents choices that our archaic, one-size-fits-hardly-anyone education system rarely does. For young people lost in super-sized schools exceeding 4,000 students or assigned to failing schools with more dropouts than graduates, charter schools provide a needed alternative."

### **CHARTER NEWS**

#### **[From Atlanta to Africa American youngsters embark on a journey of self-discovery in Ghana](#)**

**Ebony Magazine**

March 2008

Standing in that West African river was indeed a dream come true for this group of eighth-graders--the first to graduate from the 5-year-old [KIPP WAYS Academy](#) (an acronym for Knowledge Is Power Program West Atlanta Young Scholars), one of two metro Atlanta branches of the innovative national charter school program that has been featured on The Oprah Winfrey Show. They had worked hard for this life-changing journey. Every student in their class passed all required standardized tests. Their school is the No. 1 public middle school in the city of Atlanta; it ranks 11th out of Georgia's 418 middle schools; and fourth in math scores among public schools in the state. All this from students who hail from some of the city's poorest ZIP codes, neighborhoods where crime, teenage pregnancy, drug abuse and chronic poverty over-shadow academic achievement. View photos:

<http://www.ebonyjet.com/ebony/articles/gallery.aspx>

## **Help for Charters in Race for Space**

**Efforts are growing to assist charter schools in finding and affording facilities Challenges that remain big obstacles to the sector's continued expansion**

February 13, 2008

Many charter operators have had to show considerable creativity and resourcefulness in finding a place to educate their students, whether it's a former Kmart or car dealership, a church facility, or space in an office complex. Obtaining and paying for adequate facilities are often big problems for the independent public schools. Those problems are especially acute for new schools not affiliated with larger management organizations that may have more infrastructure, access to money, and other advantages. Efforts across the public and private sectors to help charters meet the facilities challenge have increased substantially in recent years, with the federal government, states, philanthropies, and others stepping up. Analysts, though, say the help still falls far short of the need.

## **Lawyer Oversees Georgia's Charter School Movement**

**Charter school policy chief Andrew Broy drafts regulations and works with legislators on ED issues**

February 8, 2008

The charter school movement is growing rapidly around the state and the country by putting business principles and results to work in school management. But in Georgia as well as a number of other states, the person charged with oversight of charter schools is neither an education administrator nor a business person, but a lawyer. "I'm not sure how you could do this job without being a lawyer," said Andrew W. Broy, associate superintendent for policy and charter schools for the Georgia Department of Education. Many of his counterparts in other states also have legal backgrounds because charter school management is a contractual arrangement. In his policy role, Broy helps draft regulations and rules for all the public schools in Georgia, including adapting federal No Child Left Behind guidelines to requirements for local schools. "The intersection of law and school policy here in this job is really fascinating," he said.

## **THE PUBLIC SPEAKS**

### **EDUCATION: Charter option has real merit**

**Atlanta Journal & Constitution opinion editorial**

**By Laurie Gray - Senior Information Architect of KnowledgeStorm**

February 19, 2008

We moved to Atlanta more than three years ago from North Carolina. Our children had been charter students in North Carolina, and we were dismayed at the lack of charter choices that we found here.

### **Georgia: to the head of the class? Isn't it worth a try to give parents more choice in educating their children?**

**Augusta Chronicle Editorial Staff**

February 17, 2008

Georgia has become sadly familiar with the bottom of state rankings in SAT scores, a highly flawed but still much-watched indicator of the health of public schools. But the state is near the top in a recent ranking of -- get this! -- school choice programs.

## **Local control earns an A+**

**Atlanta Journal & Constitution opinion editorial**

**By Kelly McCutchen - Exec. Vice Pres. of the Georgia Public Policy Foundation**

February 6, 2008

The concern expressed over local control in the editorial "Charter school hustle" (@issue, Jan. 31) is unwarranted. Local control is enhanced when parents and local, decentralized governing boards are given choice. It's high time to end the discrimination among different types of public schools. Today, students at a state-chartered public school lose approximately 40 percent of their public funding, even though their parents are local residents and local taxpayers. Parents should not be punished for seeking the best educational opportunities for their children, particularly within the public school framework. There is too much at stake to play political power games with the future of young Georgians. Legislators must open the opportunity for true public school choice to every child in Georgia, regardless of wealth or geographic location.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Technology Grants for Rural Schools**

The Rural Telephone Finance Cooperative (RFTC) offers grants from \$1,000 - \$10,000 for technology in rural schools. Examples of possible grant requests include, but are not limited to: computer-assisted learning (CAL) programs, computer equipment and programs, subject-specific tools, and electronic access to information, including CD-ROMs and Internet access in each classroom. Any public K-12 schools located within the service area of an OPASTCO telephone company may apply. A letter of nomination and support from the local telephone company must accompany all applications.

## **HIGHLIGHT YOUR SCHOOL!**

GCSA wants to highlight your school on the "new and improved" GCSA website, which will be launched very soon! GCSA would like you to forward a photo of your school building or a school sign with a short sentence which can be used as a descriptive caption. Please forward all photos to Andrew Lewis at [alewis@gacharters.org](mailto:alewis@gacharters.org).

Jeniffer Collins  
Georgia Charter Schools Association

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