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Contact: **Michele Neely**
State Charter Schools Foundation
(404) 656-2837
mneely@scsfga.org

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STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES MICHELE NEELY AS PRESIDENT



ATLANTA - The State Charter Schools Foundation of Georgia (SCSF) announced today that Michele Neely will serve as the organization’s President. Neely joins the SCSF from high-performing state charter school International Charter School of Atlanta.

“On behalf of the board, we are thrilled to announce Michele Neely as our new President,” said State Charter Schools Foundation Board Chair Johnna Robinson. “She brings invaluable experience as a former state charter school board member, staff member and parent. Michele is the ideal person to advance the SCSF mission of supporting high quality sustainable state charter schools throughout Georgia.”

The SCSF was established to support charter schools authorized by the State Charter Schools Commission, Georgia’s independent statewide charter school authorizer. These small, start-up schools have all the responsibilities of school systems and are expected to academically outperform the traditional district schools in their attendance zones, often with fewer resources. The SCSF will help bridge the resource gap that exists between state charter schools and traditional schools by fundraising and resource leveraging. More than 33,000 students across Georgia attend state charter schools, the only public school choice option in most communities.

“State charter schools are putting Georgia's children first by offering innovative educational opportunities to help them succeed in school and in life,” said State Charter Schools Foundation President Michele Neely. “They are showing results, including higher graduation rates and academic performance than other public schools, while offering unique programs that enrich students. I have seen my own children thrive at the International Charter School of Atlanta, a high-quality state charter school, and I am excited to dedicate myself to supporting state charter schools throughout our state. My goal is to leverage resources



so that these schools have the tools and funding they need to remain sustainable and impact more children in more communities.”

Neely has dedicated her career to public service and most recently acted as the Development and Communications Manager for the International Charter School of Atlanta (ICSAtlanta), a K-8 state charter school focused on dual language immersion (DLI) and the International Baccalaureate Programme. Prior to joining the administrative staff team, Neely served as a volunteer school governing board member from ICSAtlanta's first academic year through an expansion into a second building and the addition of a middle school. During her tenure at ICSAtlanta, she helped the school secure and utilize over \$1.2 million of grants and donations and was actively engaged in advocacy efforts for charter schools in Georgia.

“Michele’s unique understanding of the challenges facing state charter schools, from the start-up phase and beyond, make her a tremendous asset to our schools and the more than 33,000 students and families we serve across Georgia,” said State Charter Schools Commission Executive Director Lauren Holcomb. “I am particularly excited about her knowledge of the facilities landscape. Facilities are a challenge for all charter schools, especially state charter schools that do not typically have access to local school district buildings or capital funding. Michele will aid the charter sector in tackling this challenge.”

Before focusing on education, Neely was recognized as a program and operational expert in affordable housing, with an emphasis on the management of the Housing Choice Voucher Program, a public housing program for low-income families. In this capacity, she led nonprofit housing organizations, helped direct the statewide program in Tennessee, and acted as a consultant for the largest public housing authorities in the country, including the New York City Housing Authority, New York State Homes and Community Renewal, the Chicago Housing Authority, and the Atlanta Housing Authority.

Neely holds a Bachelor's degree in English and Spanish from Mercer University and a Master's of Public Administration with a concentration in Nonprofit Administration from Georgia State University. Originally from Nashville, she has lived in Alpharetta with her husband and two daughters for the last ten years.

The State Charter Schools Foundation of Georgia is a nonprofit foundation dedicated to supporting high quality state charter schools serving children throughout Georgia by leveraging resources to help schools launch, build capacity and grow. www.scsfga.org

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