



APPROVED 6/15/2017

Georgia Connections Academy (GACA)  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Thursday, May 18, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. ET

Held at the following location and via teleconference:  
Georgia Connections Academy  
2763 Meadow Church Road, Suite 208  
Duluth, GA 30097

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**I. Call to Order**

Ms. Hug called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. when all participants were present and able to hear each other. The school location and phone line were open for the public to attend.

**II. Roll Call**

Board Members Present at Roll Call: Alisa Hug, Rich Thompson, Steve Julal and Charlotte Collins (via phone);

Board Members Joined During Meeting: JoAnn Brown (via phone);

Guests Present: Heather Robinson, School Principal (in person); Allison Reaves, Karen Duquette, Shawn Soltz, Laura Coleman and Megann Arthur, Connections staff (all via phone).

[Mr. Soltz joined the meeting at 5:03 p.m.]

**III. Mission Statement**

Ms. Robinson read the school's Mission Statement to begin the meeting.

**IV. Public Hearing on the 2017-2018 Proposed Annual Budget**

Ms. Hug announced the commencement of the budget public hearing on the proposed 2017-2018 Annual Budget. She noted the public hearing had been published as required by Georgia Law. She asked if there were any members of the public wishing to address the proposed 2017-2018 school year budget. Hearing none, Ms. Hug asked Mr. Soltz to review the proposed budget with the Board.

Mr. Soltz referred the Board to the proposed Budget materials provided in the Board materials. He reviewed the budget development process to date that included the school leader, Board Treasurer and Connections staff. He further advised that the final Budget will be presented to the Board for their consideration at their next in-person Board meeting.

[Ms. Brown joined the meeting at 5:09 p.m.]

Board members discussed the proposed Annual Budget and thanked Mr. Soltz for his presentation. There being no questions and no members of the public in attendance, the Board closed the public hearing and resumed the regular session of the meeting.

## V. Public Comment

There were no comments at this time.

## VI. Audit Committee, Committee of the Entire Board

### a. Approval of Audit Firm Engagement for the 2016-2017 School Year Financial Audit

Mr. Julal reviewed the audit firm engagement letter, as included in the Board materials. He advised the Board that the audit firm was the same the Board had engaged for the previous school year, and reviewed the anticipated audit-related charges and scope of services. He further advised the Board that the estimate of audit-related charges was similar to the previous school year. There being no further discussion, Mr. Thompson made the following motion and it was seconded by Ms. Brown as follows:

RESOLVED, that the engagement of Brooks, McGinnis & Company, LLC for the 2016-2017 school year financial audit, as presented, is hereby accepted.

The motion passed unanimously.

## VII. Routine Business

### a. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Hug asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. There being no changes noted, Mr. Thompson made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Julal as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the May 18, 2017 Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Georgia Connections Academy, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

## VIII. Oral Reports

### a. School Leader's Report

#### i. Data Dashboard

Ms. Robinson reviewed the school data dashboard information and Monthly School Report (MSR), as included in the Board materials with the Board, highlighting the most up-to-date enrollment and performance trends.

#### ii. Graduation Plans and End of Year Activities Update

Ms. Robinson advised the Board of the school's planning for the upcoming high school graduation ceremony and encouraged Board members to attend. She further reviewed upcoming school events.

b. Financial Report

Mr. Soltz reviewed the financial report included in the Board Meeting materials. He highlighted key aspects in the school's revenue and expense reports, as well as the school's forecast for the school year.

i. Per Pupil Funding Update

Mr. Soltz provided the Board with an update on the anticipated per pupil funding increase.

**IX. Board Strategic Development**

a. Board Strategic Plan Report

i. Adoption of Strategic Plan

Ms. Hug reviewed with the Board the Strategic Plan Report, as included in the Board materials. The Board discussed the Strategic Plan in detail and expressed their support of the living document. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Collins as follows:

RESOLVED, the Strategic Plan, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

b. College and Career Academy Proposal Discussion

Ms. Hug reminded Board members of the College and Career Academy Proposal made during the previous Board meeting and requested Ms. Duquette to review her findings after further research into the school's potential pursuit of a similar program. Ms. Duquette reviewed recent meetings with Mr. Moore and Ms. Robinson and discussed the benefits and challenges with pursuing a College and Career Academy. Ms. Robinson further reviewed her desire to further investigate the proposal for consideration after the upcoming Charter Renewal. The Board discussed the proposal in detail and expressed their desire to continue the College and Career Academy discussion to create a long term plan, potentially as part of mission specific goals of the Charter Renewal process.

**X. Consent Items**

Ms. Hug asked the Board members whether there were any items from the Consent Items that they wished to have moved to Action Items for discussion, or tabled. There being no items moved, a motion was made by Mr. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Brown as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the April 20, 2017 Board Meeting;
- b. Approval of Staffing Report;
- c. Approval of LiveTutor Invoice(s);
- d. Approval of Federal Title Funding Documentation: Revised Homeless Education Policy; and
- e. Approval of Board President as Board Designee to Approve Summer Staffing Decisions for the 2017-2018 School Year; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

## **XI. Action Items**

### a. Approval of Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC Invoice for April

Mr. Julal reviewed in detail the CA invoice for the month of April as drawn from the financial report presented earlier in the meeting and contained in the Board materials. He asked the Board members whether they had any questions on the invoice or required any further explanation. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Julal and seconded by Mr. Thompson as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC invoice for the month of April, in the amount of \$1,368,491.23, as presented, are hereby approved for payment upon the availability of funds.

The motion passed unanimously.

## **XII. Information Items**

### a. State Relations Update

Ms. Duquette reviewed the written State Relations Report provided in the Board meeting materials on recent legislative activities that may impact the school.

### b. School Leadership Team Update

Ms. Reaves presented to the Board on behalf of Connections' School Leadership Team.

#### i. Curriculum Updates Timeline

In response to Board member inquiries at the last Board meeting, Ms. Reaves reviewed with the Board the expected timeline for the upcoming curriculum updates.

#### ii. School Leader Review Process Update

Ms. Reaves outlined the annual school leader review process with the Board, highlighting Ms. Brown's role as the primary reviewer. She reminded Board members that the process includes feedback from the Board through a survey. Ms. Reaves further reminded the Board that Ms. Robinson's final review will take place during the Board's Annual Meeting in June. She also reiterated the importance of Board member participation in the review process.

### c. Board Recruitment Update

Ms. Arthur provided the Board with an update on the continued search for a new Board member, and her communications with Ms. Hug regarding the vetting process. Board members discussed current Board composition, as well as their preferred background and credentials for the next candidate for the Board.

## **XIII. Adjournment and Annual In-Person Meeting Date – June 15, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.**

Ms. Hug noted that the Board was at the end of its agenda. There being no further business to discuss, the annual in-person meeting was confirmed for June 15, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. ET. The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m. following a motion made by Mr. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Collins.