



APPROVED 01/15/15

**Georgia Connections Academy (GACA)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Thursday, November 20, 2014 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**

I. Call to Order

Ms. Hug called the meeting to order at 5:07 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 (in person); Steve Julal, Charlotte Collins, Rich Thompson, JoAnn Brown and Greg Mishkin (via phone);

Guests Present: Heather Robinson, School Principal (in person); Rachel Graver, Peter Robertson, Shawn Soltz, Jay W. Ragley, Heather Woodward and Megann Arthur, Connections staff (all via phone).

III. Mission Statement

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

IV. Public Comment

There were no public comments at this time.

V. 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 November 20, 2014 Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Georgia Connections Academy, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Oral Reports

a. Principal's Report

i. Dashboard/Media Clips and Marketing

[Ms. Collins joined at 5:10 p.m.]

Ms. Robinson reviewed the school dashboard/media clips and marketing information included in the Board materials with the Board. She reviewed a few recent disciplinary actions, the recent staff PULSE survey results, and the increase in enrollment which has resulted in additional staffing needs for the school.

ii. Fall Quarterly Metrics Report

Ms. Robinson presented this item to the Board. She reviewed the data included in the Board materials, highlighting the school's performance as compared with other Connections' partnering schools of similar size and years in operation. Board members discussed the metrics data with Ms. Robinson.

iii. Update on Student Intervention Efforts – Tier 1 and Tier 2

Ms. Robinson updated the Board on Student Intervention Efforts. She advised the Board of school staff members' increased awareness of critical educational components and benchmarks, as well as Connections' useful tools for tracking student progress. Ms. Robinson further discussed the relation these efforts have to the school's annual success in goals completion.

iv. State Testing Update

Ms. Robinson provided the Board with a detailed update on state testing. She reviewed efforts to streamline testing and to provide further efficiencies for the students and staff. Ms. Robinson further reviewed the school's research to obtain computers to assist with testing and noted that further information will be presented for Board consideration at a later date. The Board discussed the technology needs and noted their interest in hearing additional information on procurement.

v. Graduate Tracking Efforts through NSC

Ms. Robinson provided the Board with an update on Connections' planned partnership with the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), to compile student data after graduation. She advised that the NSC will provide information on matriculation and graduation from two-year, four-year and graduate institutions, allowing for a more measurable determination of the success of the schools in preparing students for higher education. Board members discussed the planned initiative and indicated their support of the school's participation with the NSC.

b. Financial Report

Mr. Soltz reviewed the financial information included in the Board materials with the Board. She reviewed the balance sheet, and the school's revenue and expense statements with the Board. The Board discussed teacher compensation and other line items in detail.

c. School Leader Review Process Update

Dr. Brown outlined the annual school leader review process with the Board. She reminded Board members that the process includes feedback from the Board through a survey. Dr. Brown further reminded the Board that Ms. Robinson's mid-year review will be discussed during the January meeting. She further noted that there will be a meeting with Ms. Graver tomorrow to review and further develop the review process for the school, and meet all necessary compliance requirements for the state.

VII. Board Strategic Development

a. EMO Evaluation

Ms. Hug presented this item to the Board. She noted the ongoing work on the evaluation.

b. iNACOL Conference Update

Ms. Hug provided the Board with an update on her trip to the iNACOL Conference in Palm Springs, California. She encouraged the Board to attend further trainings if available.

c. Strategic Development Training Summary

Ms. Hug presented this item to the Board. She noted that the strategic development originally scheduled for today has been tentatively rescheduled for December 9 and further details will be provided as the date nears.

VIII. Consent Items

Ms. Hug asked the Board members whether there were any additional 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. Mishkin and seconded by Mr. Julal as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the October 16, 2014 Meeting; and
- b. Approval of Staffing Report; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Action Items

a. Approval of Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC Invoice for October

Mr. Julal reviewed in detail the CA invoice for the month of October 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 Ms. Collins and seconded by Mr. Thompson as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC invoice for the month of October, in the amount of \$1,776,607.79, as presented, is hereby approved for payment upon the availability of funds.

The motion passed unanimously.

[Ms. Arthur joined at 6:00 p.m.]

b. Approval of Bonus Payout for the 2013-2014 School Year

Ms. Hug reviewed the current bonus payouts that have been made to staff members for the 2013-2014 school year, and asked Mr. Robertson to review the tiered bonus structure for staff and previous discussions of the Board's intended payout based on school goals results. Board members discussed the communications to staff members currently, as well as the expectations for the school's performance. The Board discussed their intent to reward staff members for the school receiving a #1 ranking among virtual schools in the state. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Julal and seconded by Dr. Brown as follows:

RESOLVED, that the additional bonus payout for the 2013-2014 school year, as discussed, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

c. Approval of Revised 2014-2015 School Year Goals

Ms. Hug reviewed the school goals for the 2014-2015 school year, as previously approved by the Board. The Board discussed the option of amend the current goals to reflect the Board's desire to reward staff at the highest possible bonus level when the school receives a top ranking among virtual schools in the state. Following discussion among Board members regarding the appropriate bonus structure and weighting of goals,

This item was tabled to a future meeting for additional discussion.

X. **Information Items**

a. State Relations Update

Mr. Ragley provided the Board with an update on recent legislative activities that may impact the school.

[Dr. Brown left the meeting at 6:36 p.m.]

b. Pay Pal Proposal

Ms. Robinson presented this item to the Board. She outlined the materials included in the Board package regarding the background and support for the Pay Pal proposal for the school. Ms. Robinson reviewed the requests she has received for the school to have a Pay Pal account, and further planned discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of an account. She advised that she will provide additional information at the next meeting.

c. Staff Technology Purchase

Ms. Robinson briefly reviewed with the Board the school's request to purchase additional technology for staff members. She advised that she will provide additional information on the specifics of the request at a future meeting.

d. Outreach Update and Discussion of Future Enrollment Growth

Ms. Graver reminded the Board that the Funded Enrollment Target for the 2015-2016 School Year will be discussed for approval during the upcoming January Board meeting. She reviewed past target numbers and the predicted growth for the school based on many factors, including trends in enrollment, students currently in the pipeline and outreach efforts.

XI. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date – January 15, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 15, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. ET via teleconference. A motion was made by Mr. Mishkin and seconded by Mr. Julal to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.