



APPROVED 05/21/15

**Georgia Connections Academy (GACA)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Thursday, April 23, 2015 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 5:02 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, Steve Julal, Charlotte Collins, Rich Thompson, JoAnn Brown and Greg Mishkin (in person);

Guests Present: Heather Robinson, School Principal; Donnetta Jaye, School Staff Member (in person); Rachel Graver, Shawn Soltz, Jay W. Ragley 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

Ms. Jaye addressed the Board regarding the current Out of State Policy for teachers at the school, per the school's Employee Handbook. She detailed her current employment with the school, teaching background and desire to remain on staff while moving to a bordering state. Board members thanked Ms. Jaye for her presentation and dedication to the school, and indicated their intent to discuss her specific situation in an Executive Session later in the meeting.

V. Audit Committee, Committee of the Entire Board

a. Review and Consideration of Audit Firm Engagement for the 2014-2015 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 he was recommending was the same firm the Board had engaged for the previous school year, and the estimate of audit-related charges was similar to the previous school year. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Collins and seconded by Mr. Mishkin as follows:

RESOLVED, that the engagement of Brooks, McGinnis & Company, LLC for the 2014-2015 school year audit, as presented, is hereby accepted.

The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Routine Business

a. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Hug asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. Board members indicated their desire to add an Executive Session, pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 50-14-3 – to discuss the employment, compensation or periodic evaluation of an employee. There being no additional changes noted, Mr. Thompson made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Mishkin as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the April 23, 2015 Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Georgia Connections Academy, as amended, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Oral Reports

a. Principal's Report

Ms. Robinson reviewed recent school and student activities with the Board.

i. Dashboard/Media Clips and Marketing

Ms. Robinson reviewed the school dashboard/media clips and marketing information included in the Board materials with the Board.

ii. State Testing Update

Ms. Robinson provided the Board with an update on the state testing. The Board had extensive discussion on school benchmarks and testing expectations and timing of results.

iii. Graduation Plans and End of Year Activities

Ms. Robinson updated the Board on the number of students expected to participate in the upcoming Prom, as well as other end of year activities. She further reviewed final preparations for the May 16th graduation ceremony.

iv. School Operations Metrics

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.

v. SCSC Compliance Visit Update

Ms. Robinson reviewed the SCSC Compliance Visit report with the Board, as included in the Board materials. She highlighted points of interest for the school, and specific feedback received.

b. Financial Report

Mr. Soltz reviewed the financial information included in the Board materials with the Board. He reviewed the balance sheet, and the school's revenue and expense statements with the Board, and anticipated funding sources for the school.

c. School Leader Review Process Update

Dr. Brown reviewed the current progress in the school leader review process, including meetings to date and the implementation of the state's recommended evaluation process. Ms. Graver briefly reminded the Board that the annual review process includes feedback from the Board through a survey, a link to which will be emailed to the Board soon after this meeting.

VIII. Board Strategic Development

a. EMO Evaluation

Mr. Julal reviewed the process for the completion of the EMO Evaluation, and asked for feedback from Connections. Ms. Arthur advised the Board that the evaluation had been received and reviewed, and asked the Board for their preferred method of continued discussion on the feedback. Board members requested a written response from Connections regarding the comments in the evaluation, and agreed that a standing item on future board agendas reflecting any outstanding action items would also be helpful going forward.

[Dr. Brown left the meeting at 6:07 p.m.]

b. Strategic Development Training Update

Ms. Hug thanked members of the Board for their attendance at the strategic development training held earlier in the day, and indicated that the session was a successful one for the Board.

IX. 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 Ms. Collins as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the February 19, 2015 Board Meeting;
- b. Approval of Minutes from the March 3, 2015 Special Board Meeting;
- c. Approval of Staffing Report;
- d. Approval of School Calendar for the 2015-2016 School Year;
- e. Approval of Staff Compensation Plan for the 2015-2016 School Year;
- f. Approval of Employee Handbook Revision(s);
- g. Approval of Curriculum for the 2015-2016 School Year; and
- h. Approval of Federal Title Funding Plans for 2014-2015 School Year; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

X. Action Items

a. Approval of Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC Invoices for February and March

Mr. Julal reviewed in detail the CA invoices for the months of February and March 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 invoices or required any further explanation. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Julal and seconded by Mr. Mishkin as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC invoices for the month of February, in the amount of \$1,324,344.52 and the month of March, in the amount of \$1,801,686.68, as presented, are hereby approved for payment upon the availability of funds.

The motion passed unanimously.

XI. Information Items

a. State Relations Update

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

[Mr. Julal left the meeting in person and joined via phone at 6:17 p.m.]

b. Board Counsel Update

Ms. Hug provided the Board with an update on Board Counsel. She advised that one of the primary attorneys that the Board has worked with, Mr. Bryan Tyson, is leaving the firm and going to work in another area of law for the state. Ms. Hug further advised that she had received information from the Board's engaged firm as to the associate who would be working with the Board going forward.

c. School Leadership Team Support Update

Ms. Graver advised the Board that there are upcoming changes within Connections regarding School Leadership Team Support for the school and Board. She further advised that the role of primary liaison to the Board on behalf of Connections' School Leadership Team would be transitioning to Allison Reaves for the next school year, and that she expected to introduce Ms. Reaves to the Board at their May meeting.

d. Board Planning for the 2015-2016 School Year

Ms. Arthur discussed the planning for the 2015-2016 school year that Connections Academy has been working on with the school.

i. Proposed Meeting Schedule

The Board confirmed their support of maintaining the current meeting schedule for the upcoming school year. Ms. Arthur advised that the consideration of the Board meeting schedule for the 2015-2016 school year will be included on the June Annual Meeting agenda.

ii. Board Composition

Board members discussed current Board composition and recruiting efforts, as well as the Board attendance policy currently in place.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION - Pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 50-14-3 – to discuss the employment, compensation or periodic evaluation of an employee

A motion was made by Mr. Mishkin and seconded by Mr. Julal, to enter into Executive Session at 6:22 p.m. via a roll call vote of the Board pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 50-14-3 – to discuss the employment, compensation or periodic evaluation of an employee. Board members in attendance were Alisa Hug, Charlotte Collins, Greg Mishkin, JoAnn Brown, Steve Julal and Rich Thompson. Guests in attendance were Rachel Graver and Megann Arthur. All others left the meeting at this time.

After the Board concluded their discussion, the Board resumed their open session via roll call vote motioned by Mr. Mishkin and seconded by Mr. Thompson at 6:33 p.m.

No action was taken during Executive Session.

Ms. Hug reminded the Board of their discussion during Executive Session. There being no additional discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Mishkin and seconded by Mr. Thompson as follows:

RESOLVED, that the denial of the request for an exception to the school's Out of State employee policy for staff member Donnetta Jaye, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

XIII. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date – May 21, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. ET via teleconference. A motion was made by Ms. Collins and seconded by Mr. Mishkin to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.