



**APPROVED 9/15/2016**

**Georgia Connections Academy (GACA)  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Thursday, August 18, 2016 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 5:05 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, Charlotte Collins, Steve Julal and Greg Mishkin (all via phone);

Board Members Absent: JoAnn Brown;

Guests Present: Heather Robinson, School Principal (in person); Allison Reaves, Karen Duquette, Shawn Soltz 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 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. Mishkin made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Thompson as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the August 18, 2016 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. School Leader's Report

#### i. Data Dashboard

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

#### ii. Enrollment Update

Ms. Robinson reviewed the current enrollment with the Board, included those students in the pre-approved phases of their applications. She advised that there were currently 3,910 students enrolled, and reviewed those in the pipeline. Ms. Robinson also discussed the percentage of welcome calls completed to date.

Board members discussed waitlists for specific grade levels, as well as the process for enrollment at the start of the school year.

Ms. Robinson also discussed summer in-person information sessions and participation rates for these sessions by location.

#### iii. Back to School Activities, Staffing and Training Update

Ms. Robinson discussed with the Board recent back to school activities, including successful orientations with students, families and teachers. She also updated the Board on staffing for the school, as well as how bonus payouts were made for those teachers who do not return for the next school year. The Board discussed staffing and bonus payout procedures.

#### 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.

### 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. Unaudited 2015-2016 Financial Results

Mr. Soltz reviewed the unaudited financial results from the previous school year, and provided an estimated timeline for the school's audit field work to be completed.

#### ii. TRS Audit Update

Mr. Soltz provided the Board with an update on the Teachers' Retirement System audit recently completed. He advised that all field work had been completely successfully, and the school will be included in the final results released later this fall.

## VII. Board Strategic Development

### a. Performance Framework Update

Ms. Robinson provided the Board with an update on the school's ongoing efforts regarding the performance framework requirements. She reviewed recent communications with the Commission. Board members had extensive discussion on the framework, the school's metrics compared to similar schools and the impact on the school of specific areas of assessment. Following discussion on many areas of the framework, the Board requested additional discussion on next steps at their September meeting.

### b. Board Policies Review Update

Ms. Hug advised the Board that the draft policies previously discussed were still being reviewed by Board Counsel, and will be presented for consideration at a future meeting.

Mr. Julal indicated that he would soon need to leave the meeting, so the Board moved Action Items up on the agenda.

### Approval of Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC Invoices for May and June

Mr. Julal reviewed in detail the CA invoices for the months of May and June 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 months of May, in the amount of \$1,959,815.66 and June, in the amount of \$ 2,709,407.25, as presented, are hereby approved for payment upon the availability of funds.

The motion passed unanimously.

### Approval of Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC Invoice for Summer School 2016

Mr. Julal reviewed in detail the CA invoice for summer school 2016, 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. Mishkin as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC invoice for summer school 2016, in the amount of \$18,674.00, as presented, is hereby approved for payment upon the availability of funds.

The motion passed unanimously.

[Mr. Julal left the meeting at 6:02 p.m.]

### Approval of School Focus Goals for the 2016-2017 School Year

Ms. Robinson reviewed the school focus goals for the 2016-2017 school year included in the Board package with the Board. Ms. Robinson reminded the Board that the school goals represent the major driver for the staff incentive plan. The Board discussed the formula of goal completion and the calculation of staff bonuses. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Thompson and seconded by Mr. Mishkin as follows:

RESOLVED, that the school focus goals for the 2016-2017 school year, as presented, are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

#### Approval of MOU re Affiliation of Students for Education Field Experiences and Student Teaching

Ms. Robinson reviewed the draft MOU with The College of Education at Brenau University for student teaching opportunities, as well as the background to the development of the draft and communications with Brenau University. She discussed the advantages of the partnership, as well as the ongoing negotiations regarding potential costs and additional opportunities for staff. Board members had discussion on the MOU and partnership opportunities with The College of Education at Brenau University, as well as other local institutions of higher learning. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Mishkin and seconded by Mr. Thompson as follows:

RESOLVED, that the MOU re Affiliation of Students for Education Field Experiences and Student Teaching, as discussed, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

#### **VIII. 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 Mr. Mishkin as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the June 16, 2016 Annual Board Meeting;
- b. Approval of Minutes from the July 5, 2016 Special Board Meeting;
- c. Approval of Staffing Report;
- d. Approval of 2016-2017 Base Salaries and Incentive Percentage, Career Ladder Positions and Home-Worker Stipends;
- e. Approval of Connections Training and Professional Development Offering for the 2016-2017 School Year; and
- f. Approval for School Leader to Review and Authorize Out of State and International Field Trips; are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

#### **IX. Action Items**

- a. Approval of Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC Invoices for May and June

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

- b. Approval of Connections Academy of Georgia, LLC Invoice for Summer School 2016

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

- c. Approval of School Focus Goals for 2016-2017 School Year

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

- d. Approval of MOU re Affiliation of Students for Education Field Experiences and Student Teaching

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

**X. Information Items**

- a. State Relations Update

Ms. Duquette provided the Board with an update on recent legislative activities that may impact the school.

- b. School Leadership Team Update

Ms. Reaves provided the Board with an update on behalf of Connections' School Leadership Team.

- c. Conflict of Interest Statements Reminder

Ms. Arthur advised the Board that the annual Conflict of Interest statements for the 2015-2016 school year would be sent prior to the next Board meeting, and thanked Board members in advance for their completion, per Board-adopted policy.

- d. Board Training and Conference Attendance for the 2016-2017 School Year

Ms. Robinson reminded the Board of the state's mandatory governance training, and the options that have currently been released by the state for completing the necessary training credits. She further reviewed the options for the school for the use of any surplus funds currently earmarked for Board conference and training attendance. Board members briefly discussed the Board training options for the school year, as well as the current budget.

**XI. Adjournment and Annual Meeting Date – September 15, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.**

There being no further business to discuss, the next meeting was confirmed for September 15, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. ET. The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m. following a motion made by Mr. Mishkin and seconded by Mr. Thompson.